Christmas at Westminster 2020

Although Christmas at Westminster is very different this year, we hope you will join us in celebrating the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ, in as many ways as you can!

Christmas Box Project
Deadline for check and online donations: Sunday, December 13
Our Christmas Box Project has been reimagined this year! We’ll continue to share holiday joy with families in need, but in a safe way. See page 10 for more information.

Christmas Concert: Wilmington Handbell Ensemble
Saturday, December 12, 4:00 p.m.
The Wilmington Handbell Ensemble, under the direction of Kerry Dietz, will present a Christmas concert in our sanctuary. In-person and livestream options will be available. See more details on page 4.

Virtual Christmas Caroling
Sunday, December 20, 4:00 p.m.
With support from the Westminster Choir and our children and youth music program, our annual Christmas caroling outing will be done virtually this year. See page 5 for more information.

Christmas Eve
Thursday, December 24
Service of Story and Song – 4:00 p.m. (Virtual Only)
Featuring Westminster’s storytellers, youth instrumentalists, and music for handbells, this pre-recorded, informal, and lively service trumpets the joy of Jesus’ birth! Join the virtual service and a live watch party using the links provided in the Weekly Word e-newsletter.

Traditional “Sharing the Light” Service – 8:00 p.m.
This service will be no silent night! An inspiring sermon by Dr. Jones will be framed with Christmas carols sung by our choristers and a four-hand piano duo. For COVID safety reasons, a creative alternative to candlelight is in the works! Join the service in person or online through the Weekly Word e-newsletter.
Advent is here. Like Mary and Joseph on their way to be registered in Royal David’s city; like the Wise Ones traveling westward in search of a star, our pilgrimage to Bethlehem has begun. Throughout this Advent journey, we will prepare our hearts and minds to welcome the Christ Child; we will prepare to kneel in Bethlehem.

No doubt kneeling in Bethlehem will look different this year. Instead of bath-robed children processing down the aisle to *The First Nowell*, kneeling in Bethlehem may involve a bath-robed family processing into the living room to catch the Christmas Eve service on YouTube. Instead of singing *Silent Night* by candlelight, we may pass this silent, holy night enjoying the twinkling lights on the Christmas tree before heading upstairs to “sleep in heavenly peace.” Like everything else in 2020, our celebrations may bear little resemblance to those of Christmases past.

Some of us have cancelled travel plans because setting foot on an airplane or visiting older relatives feels too risky. Many of us are trying to figure out who and how many can gather ’round the family table for Christmas dinner. All of us, I expect, are missing some aspect of our Christmas traditions: celebrating with friends at holiday parties, taking children or grandchildren to meet Santa, attending performances of *The Nutcracker* or Handel’s *Messiah*, picking out gifts for Westminster’s Christmas Box Project, singing carols. Of the many things I will miss this December, gathering with so many of you in our sanctuary on Christmas Eve tops the list.

Yes, kneeling in Bethlehem will look different this year. And, as we prepare for a very different Advent and Christmas, we may wonder where — or if — we’ll encounter the Christ Child since we can’t worship in ways that have long lifted our souls.

This year I take comfort in remembering that the people of ancient Israel did not expect to be kneeling *before a manger* in Bethlehem.
They were watching for a Messiah, yes. They were even looking for him in Royal David’s city. But the idea that God would enter the world as a helpless babe was — and is — a revolutionary claim. But, then, that’s often how God works — through the mundane, the lowly, the surprising. As the poet Ann Weems writes in “The Coming of God,” the Holy One comes to us in unexpected ways:

Our God is the One who comes to us in a burning bush, in an angel’s song, in a newborn child.

Our God is the One who cannot be found locked in the church, not even in the sanctuary.

Our God will be where God will be with no constraints, no predictability.

Our God lives where our God lives, and destruction has no power and even death cannot stop the living.

Our God will be born where God will be born, but there is no place to look for the One who comes to us.

When God is ready God will come even to a godforsaken place like a stable in Bethlehem.

Watch ... for you know not when God comes.

Watch, that you might be found whenever wherever God comes.¹

Fellow pilgrims — As we prepare to kneel once again in Bethlehem, may we watch for God in the unexpected. Who knows? Maybe this year, when Christmas will look and feel so very different, the very God who “became flesh and blood and moved into the neighborhood”² will surprise us by bringing Bethlehem to us.

Peace,

². John 1:14, The Message
Music at Westminster

F. Anthony Thurman, Director of Music and Organist

“It’s Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas,” as Meredith Willson’s popular song goes. Although Christmas will look much different this year because of the coronavirus pandemic, there are some traditions we will continue, others we will adapt, and even some we will have to invent.

Christmas Concert

Wilmington Handbell Ensemble
Saturday, December 12, at 4:00 p.m.

The Wilmington Handbell Ensemble, under the direction of Kerry Dietz, will present a Christmas concert in our church sanctuary on Saturday, December 12, at 4:00 p.m. The program will feature Christmas carol arrangements by Michael Helman, as well as works for handbells and organ, and organ solo. In-person attendance will follow the same protocols as Sunday services. The concert will be livestreamed on Westminster’s YouTube channel. More details can be found in the Westminster Weekly Word e-newsletter.

Voices in Bronze

We are resurrecting Westminster’s handbell choir to play during the Christmas season. No prior ringing experience is necessary, but the ability to read music is helpful and a commitment to rehearsal attendance is essential. For more information or to participate, e-mail TonyThurman@wpc.org.

1502 W. 13th Street • Wilmington, DE 19806 • (302) 654-5214 • www.wpc.org
Christmas Caroling — A Virtual Choir

Sunday, December 20, at 4:00 p.m.

Westminster’s annual Christmas caroling outing to local retirement homes will be done virtually this year. This extraordinary outreach ministry, which is organized by the Deacons, also includes the delivery of beautiful poinsettias to our homebound members. While the Deacons will still deliver poinsettias, our gift of music will be shared online this year.

You don’t have to be an opera singer to share your gift of song this Christmas. With support from the Westminster Choir and our children and youth music program, we are making a video recording of several favorite Christmas carols plus the Hallelujah Chorus to share. Participants will record their individual portions at home using a soundtrack and instructions I will provide. Professional video and audio editing software will then be used to synchronize and combine the recordings into a virtual choir. The finished recording will be released on Westminster’s YouTube channel on Sunday afternoon, December 20, at 4:00 p.m., where it will be available for replay throughout the Christmas season. For more information or to participate, please e-mail TonyThurman@wpc.org.

In the News

Once again, Westminster’s tower chimes were in the news! Susan Spilecki was featured on Election Day by 6ABC News during the 4, 5, and 11 o’clock news hours. Church members, friends, and those voting at the church gathered in the parking lot and front lawn to listen to “Sacred Hymns and Songs of Country” during two half-hour concerts that included Amazing Grace, Lift Every Voice and Sing,
O God Our Help in Ages Past, God Bless America, American the Beautiful, the Star-Spangled Banner, and much more. We are grateful for this gift of music to our community and for the bell offerings that Sue and Craig Checkel make before and after our Sunday services each week.

Here are some folks who joined us!
CHRISTMAS OFFERING 2020

Our Christmas Offering bolsters the work of Christ as we empower our brothers and sisters worldwide, shelter homeless families, support children and young adults, assist those living with mental illness, and work for justice and peace. Every dollar you give goes beyond our walls to ministries that share the love of God with those in need. This year, your gifts will be distributed to:

**25%**

**Church in the World Projects** – These global programs in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Guatemala, and the Middle East promote peace in areas of conflict, help reduce the adverse impacts of using wood as a cooking fuel, provide humanitarian assistance for those in poverty, and educate and empower girls and women.

**20%**

**Family Promise** – Family Promise of Northern New Castle County is a non-profit organization that prevents and ends homelessness for families, enabling them to stay together as they work toward housing independence. Westminster’s building and our dedicated volunteers provide temporary shelter and hospitality to these families four weeks each year.

**20%**

**UrbanPromise** – UrbanPromise Wilmington equips children and young adults with the skills necessary for academic achievement, life management, personal growth, and servant leadership according to Christian principles. Our members serve as tutors.

**15%**

**National Alliance on Mental Illness** – The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) strives to improve the lives of individuals and their families living with mental illness. Through education programs, public policy advocacy, and public awareness events, NAMI and its Delaware chapter combat the stigmas that further harm those living with mental illness in our community.

**15%**

**Delaware Center for Justice** – Seeking justice for all Delawareans, the Delaware Center for Justice envisions a community that promotes safety, equity, and healing. DCJ facilitates crime prevention and intervention programs, pursues legislative reform, and helps victims of crime.

**5%**

**Churches for Middle East Peace** – Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) is a coalition of 29 national church denominations and organizations that works to encourage U.S. policies that actively promote a comprehensive resolution to conflicts in the Middle East with a focus on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Thank you for your generous support!
MAKE YOUR CHRISTMAS OFFERING ONLINE

We have added the 2020 Christmas Offering to the online giving options. From December 1 to December 23, at 4:00 p.m., you can set up a one-time transaction to be deducted from a checking or savings account. Visit our website at www.wpc.org and click on “Donate Now” to login or create a new user profile. You will need to select a transaction date of December 15 or December 28. If you have any questions, please contact Colleen Falasco at cfalasco@wpc.org or (302) 654-5214 ext. 131. Alternatively, a letter and offering envelope will be mailed in December for those who prefer to give to the Christmas Offering by check.

DO YOU MAKE RECURRING ONLINE PLEDGE PAYMENTS?

Are you one of our faithful who gives regular donations online? Remember to update your periodic payment amount to reflect your 2021 pledge. You should do this between December 16, 2020 and January 13, 2021.

Go to www.wpc.org and click “Donate Now” to log in. Under “My Scheduled Transactions,” click Edit and update the dollar amount only if necessary. Please do not add a transaction (unless you have deleted the existing transaction). Contact Colleen Falasco at cfalasco@wpc.org or (302) 654-5214 ext. 131 if you have any questions.
If you wish to make a contribution toward the decoration of the church for the Christmas season, you may do so in memory of, or in honor of, loved ones. Please complete this form, make check payable to Westminster Presbyterian Church, and mail to Susan Alexander at the front desk by Thursday, December 10. For any form received after that date, the names will be listed in the December 27th bulletin.

DONATION AMOUNT

☐ $20  ☐ $40  ☐ $60  ☐ $80  ☐ $100  ☐ Other $ ____________

PLEASE PRINT NEATLY

❖ In Memory Of: (FOR THE DECEASED)

______________________________

Deceased Person’s Name

❖ In Honor Of: (FOR THE LIVING)

______________________________

Living Person’s Name

❖ Given By:

______________________________

Donor’s Name and Telephone Number

If you wish to take a poinsettia plant home with you, you may do so following the 8:00 p.m. service on Christmas Eve. Poinsettias will also be delivered to local retirement communities to share the joy of the season.
HARK, ALL ANGELS!
HELP MAKE CHRISTMAS MERRY FOR THOSE IN NEED

With just days left to fill our reimagined Christmas Boxes with your homemade cookies, cards and donations for food and gift cards, Westminster’s volunteer elves need your help. We would love for you to help provide joy to 75 families in need this Christmas.

Be an angel and contribute in one or all three ways!

Be a Donation Angel by December 13!

Instead of collecting non-perishable foods and taking stars from the “Star Trees,” we are accepting check and online donations now through Sunday, December 13 so that we can purchase a ShopRite food gift card for each family (for instance, a $30 card for a family of four), a $20 Walmart gift card for each of their children 18 and under, and seasonal art supplies for the youngest children to feel the joy of having a gift to open.

We know some of our members have lost their jobs, savings, and more during this pandemic, while others are more fortunate. Please give what you can, and hear the bells chime in your generous heart.

Your generosity and check or online donation (in any amount) is deeply appreciated. Please write and mail checks to Westminster Presbyterian Church with “Christmas Box Project” on the memo line or visit www.wpc.org, click the “Donate Now” button at the top of the page, and select “Christmas Boxes Project” from the list of options.
Wait...here are more fun ways to share your love this Christmas!

🎁 **Be a Cookie Angel!**

If you would like to bake cookies in your own home, please email Cookie Elves Polly and Jim Carter (pylecarter@comcast.net) and they’ll put you on the Cookie Angels list! Pack each dozen in quart size zip-lock baggies for our recipient families, and drop the cookies off to the Christmas Box Collection Elf in Westminster’s parking lot on **Sunday, December 13, between 8:45 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.**

🎁 **Be a Card-Making Angel!**

Instead of making cards or decorating cookie boxes together on Zoom as described in the October/November *Chimes*, card-making kits were handed out at WPC’s Fall Festival for children to make at home and return to the church. And, who better to decorate the cookie boxes than the recipient families’ little ones? To delight and help them decorate, each of the recipient families having a child age 2-12 will receive a mini Christmas Box containing a Santa coloring book, pack of crayons, and stickers – thanks to your generosity! If you picked up a card-making packet at the Fall Festival and will be making cards for recipients, please drop the cards off to the Christmas Box Collection Elf in Westminster’s parking lot on **Sunday, December 13, between 8:45 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.**

**For COVID safety**, place your homemade cards and cookies in the trunk of your car. When you see the Elf in the church parking lot, just pull up and pop open your trunk. That’s it! Please stay safe inside your car. The Collection Elf will unload your donation from your open trunk into the “Christmas Box Sleigh.”

Please check the *Westminster Weekly Word* e-newsletter each week for any unanticipated updates and additional information.

*Continued on page 12*
**Distribution Day**

*Tuesday, December 15* is the Elves’ Out-of-the-Christmas-Box Distribution Day to the 75 referred families in need.

Our Christmas Box Project is an annual tradition and one of Westminster’s biggest missions of the year. With everyone’s help, our church can again provide a cheerful reimagined Christmas Box of food and gift cards, and your handmade cookies and cards, to 75 families in need. Please join others in one of the activities and donate what you can. Thank you for sharing the love of Christ.

Chief Elf Marlys Kerr and all of her volunteer elves wish you, your loved ones, and all our mission partners the blessings of hope, peace and joy this Christmas season.

With love and gratitude,

The Elves

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**PRAYERS NEEDED FOR URBANPROMISE STUDENTS**

UrbanPromise (UP) staff member Lori McClain is seeking volunteers who agree to pray for select UP students. This program was started last school year, whereby some kids who were struggling at the UP Academy were paired anonymously with adults who agreed to pray for their student. The “Prayer Warriors” knew only the first name of their child. When the school year closed, the principal, Joel, was amazed at the turnaround those kids experienced!

With that success in mind, Lori is seeking to expand the program. If you want to become a Prayer Warrior to support a specific student in his/her struggles in school, please contact Lori via email at lori@urbanpromise.org. She will give you the name of your “prayer child” and thank you for joining this effort.
October 28, 2020

Westminster Presbyterian Church
202 Vernet Dr.
Hockessin, DE 19707

Friends
At Westminster Presbyterian Church,

“This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God’s people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.” 2 Cor. 9:12

UrbanPromise is grateful for the ongoing, generous support of our friends at Westminster Presbyterian Church. From providing us meeting space for our staff bible study, volunteers for Camp Promise, funding that undergirds our ministry and college students, backpacks and school supplies for our elementary and high schools, to Christmas gifts for our families, we are overwhelmed by your love and kindness.

Just so you know, our Academy graduates (see photos) and returning college students were thrilled to receive a scholarship from the college retention fund. What a boost to their esteem to have this critical funding available for books and tuition.

The huge donation of backpacks and school supplies this fall really blessed our teachers and students. Stuffed backpacks were hand delivered to each students’ home in time for virtual school to begin!

Thank you for these and your many other beautiful acts of love for our children and families!

May God bless you,

Lori McClain
UrbanPromise Wilmington
484-643-2911
lori@urbanpromise.org
CELEBRATING 14 YEARS OF 180 YOUTH MINISTRY

180 is a comprehensive lineup of diverse, fun and meaningful programs for students in grades 6–12.

Susan Moseley
November 6, 2020

I believe the program began in the fall of 2006. Mary Beth Davis and I realized that the number of youth involved in church had dropped significantly after the youth minister, Dave Colby, left to accept a new position at Central Presbyterian Church in St. Paul, Minnesota. We wanted to offer them a new vision that would inspire them to return. We chose “180˚ A New Direction” because 180 degrees on a compass or geometric circle implies “opposite direction.” Following Christ meant heading in a new direction that was different (counter-culture) to mainstream culture.

Emily Knepper
October 27, 2020

I hope to see 180 continue beyond my time as a leader. Being able to serve as a member of the 180 leadership team for the past three years has allowed me to reflect on how important the 180 program was to me when I was a youth participant. I take a lot of pride in the fact that I am able to have the opportunity to impact the kids we have now the way the youth leaders I had impacted me. 180 was something I looked forward to when I was a youth and still look forward to today. Those two hours with the kids are my break from the craziness of law school and the rest of the world.
Tommy Neilson  
October 29, 2020

I love working with 180 because of the way it has developed into a family for the youth who are involved. As a community, 180 grows spiritually and personally together while having a great time doing it!

Susan Williamson  
November 1, 2020

180 Youth Ministry continues to thrive and evolve as an important Westminster Church ministry where youth and their friends gather once a week. Many of the youth and their leaders have grown up with Westminster as their “church home.” We are blessed by their presence always!
SAVE THE DATE

“Bring It! SATURDAY” COLLECTION FESTIVAL

Saturday, January 9, 2021
9:00 – 11:00 a.m.
WPC Parking Lot

DROP-OFF DONATION STATIONS WILL BE MARKED WITH BALLOONS AND SIGNS:

• Annual “Helping Hands” glove and mitten collection for Friendship House, for individuals served by Friendship House Empowerment Centers and Code Purple

• Friendship House Clothing Bank van will be in our parking lot to provide a convenient, easy drop-off for clean used winter clothing, blankets, and coats

• Create a festival of caring, showing Westminster’s continued commitment to serving the community

• More details to follow in the Westminster Weekly Word e-newsletter, Dr. Jones’ weekly email message, and the January/February Chimes
OUR NEXT PROJECT IN GUATEMALA…

First and foremost, thank you! This spring and summer, Westminster, along with 12 other churches in the Guatemala Partnership of New Castle Presbytery, worked with our in-country partners to provide an incredible 525 emergency food kits (ncpguatemala.com/food-kits) to vulnerable families in Guatemala. We are so grateful that each and every woman in the Association of Mam Christian Women for Development has now received a food kit – amounting to 2,700 people having enough food for an entire month.

So what is next, you ask? Egg-laying chickens, of course!

To date, 140 women of the Association have also received a set of three egg-laying chickens to complement their food kit, thanks in-part to an anonymous Westminster donor. These chickens will provide a sustainable source of protein for a family – 720 eggs per year!

We are now working to ensure that the remaining 385 women also receive three chickens each. We hope you will help us!

A gift of $40 will purchase a set of three chickens for a family struggling with food insecurity. To learn more about this project and donate online, go to http://ncpguatemala.com/egg-laying-chickens. You can also give via Westminster’s Echo Giving program using this form: http://www.wpc.org/uploads/ECHO-Giving-Form-2020.pdf

Thank you!
What does it mean to be a member of a church? What do you want more of in your experience as a church member? How do you engage and how would you like to engage more?

A new discernment team is forming and has begun to interview Westminster members. The team’s members* hope to talk with you soon.

Elder Janet Steinwedel is leading the engagement team. Here she explains a little about their work:

Maintaining Westminster’s vital and resilient Christian community is very important to all of us. Seeing our congregation engage in events, in mission efforts, and the day-to-day work of the church like a well-oiled machine, is impressive. Involving new people in our congregation re-enlivens what we do and why we do it.

With the challenges that the pandemic has brought about, we have felt even more urgently the need to look at the Emerging Church — what must we think about now to more fully engage and support our community? How do we initiate and support the things that will be increasingly important to our members and potential members?

The “Emerging Church” is not a new concept. We’ve been discussing the decline in membership of mainline churches around the country for some time. We’ve been discussing the decline in church membership around the country for years. According to the Pew Research Center, “The religious landscape of the United States continues to change at a
rapid clip...65% of American adults describe themselves as Christians when asked about their religion, down 12 percentage points over the past decade. Meanwhile, the religiously unaffiliated share of the population, consisting of people who describe their religious identity as atheist, agnostic or “nothing in particular,” now stands at 26%.” (Pew Research Center, “In U.S., Decline of Christianity Continues at Rapid Pace,” October 17, 2019)

All denominations have seen declines. Westminster has been no exception. However, during this same time, our mission programs have exploded. Global outreach has increased with expanding involvement in Guatemala and the addition of mission activity in Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine. Our urban missions are stronger than ever. In addition to our long-time support of ministries such as Friendship House, we have added Urban Promise, Family Promise, and Habitat builds, and the recent purchase of a house to provide transitional housing for those who are determined to rebuild their lives. The various missions we support provide our members with numerous opportunities to live out their faith.

This Spring we were challenged to enhance the way we use technology. As a church community, we have learned a lot. Perhaps you’ve joined a Zoom meeting or took part in worship online and have some personal insight as to the new use of technology and how we’re advancing our tools and abilities.

There are likely other ways we can build on what we do well and, at the same time, seek to recognize opportunities for what else we can attend to or try out.

Members and friends of the Engagement Team will be making calls, sending emails, and setting up opportunities for small Zoom groups to come together and talk about what is important and what they might imagine the emerging church to be. Together, we will be building our future and a future that includes all those souls drawn to our inspiring, interesting, and attractive community.

To better understand the work of the team and the process they are undertaking, visit this link for the PowerPoint tutorial: http://www.wpc.org/uploads/WPC_Engagement_Process.pdf

*Members: Michele Butler, Jill Getty, Jon McPheeters, Nancy Michener, and Janet Steinwedel. We also have “Friends of the Team” (Nicole Hughes, Teresa Lunardi, Barbara Stratton) who will support the team. Sudie Niesen Thompson will act as Staff Liaison. If you feel called to help, please be in touch with Janet at (302) 690-5207 (call, text) or janet@leadersinsight.com.
REFORM DELAWARE’S PROBATION SYSTEM

Delaware’s broken probation system is a pipeline to prison, impacting individuals, families, and entire communities across the state every day. The probation system is not making Delaware safer — but it is costing the state millions of dollars that could be spent on victim services and community-based treatment and rehabilitation programs.

Delaware must join the scholars, policymakers, and correctional executives from around the country who are calling for and implementing significant reforms to their probation systems.

Now is the time.


Roughly half of people on probation in Delaware make simple mistakes that shouldn’t warrant any prison time — but our broken probation system could force them back into prison anyway.

For individuals returning home after incarceration, the hurdles to successful re-entry are substantial. Returning citizens struggle to find housing, transportation, medical care, and employment at a livable wage. On top of this, many face mental health and substance abuse challenges. The probation system and its myriad of reporting requirements, meetings, costs for treatment, curfews, and surveillance are insurmountable hurdles for too many.

Can we work toward a better system? As Delawareans, we can cut our prison population, give returning citizens a real chance at success, reduce recidivism, make Delaware safer, and save taxpayer dollars.

If we change our probation system and the culture around community correction, we change lives.
What You Need to Know

94% — Ninety-four percent of the people sent to prison for probation violations have not committed a new crime.

1 out of every 3 — One out of every three people released from prison were re-arrested within three years for a technical probation violation.

$37 million — If Delaware cut the number of probation violations by 60% and reduced the average length of time a person must serve for a violation from 4 to 2 months, it would reduce its prison population by 1,092 people and save at least $37 million by 2025.

How You Can Make a Difference

Read personal stories of the impact of today’s system:
www.peoplenotprobation.com/people-not-probation/personal-stories

Sign the petition:
action.aclu.org/petition/de-people-not-probation
We are called as Christians to care for God’s creation, and there are many practical ways to do so. What follows are ways to help improve the sustainability of the planet.

The number of cars on the road has recently dropped due to the pandemic, although that number has increased since shelter-in-place restrictions were lifted. So, if you drive a car multiple times per week, then there is a lot you can do to help the environment with the way you manage your car. The best thing you can do is not drive and instead walk, cycle, use public transportation, or carpool, but realistically there are many times when driving is necessary. The four ways you can help the environment with your own car are:

1. **Plan your trip.** Can your trip be timed to avoid sitting in traffic? Can you have multiple stops in one trip versus multiple separate trips, such as in running errands? Perhaps your work commute is flexible to allow for commuting during off-peak hours. Idling in traffic has been shown to cost 1 to 2 cents per minute from burning gas and is of course no fun for drivers.

2. **Drive eco-friendly.** Driving slowly and in a relaxed manner saves gas compared to aggressive driving with its frequent lane changing, heavy acceleration and sudden braking. Relaxed driving is also safer and less stressful than aggressive driving. The inset provides more details on different ways to driving eco-friendly and its benefits.

3. **Keep your car in shape.** The graphic below shows the fuel savings that can be achieved when maintaining your car properly.

4. **Keep things light and smooth.** On a hot day, run the air conditioning at high speeds but use open windows at low speeds. Lighter cars generally are more fuel efficient than heavy cars, so keep your car light: do not haul unnecessary heavy items in your car since it can affect your fuel economy by 1% per 100 lbs. in smaller vehicles. You may want to fill your fuel tank halfway to save on fuel weight, but try not let the fuel run below one-quarter since it could stress the fuel pump. Finally, remove roof-top cargo boxes at high speeds since they increase fuel consumption by up to 20% due to increased drag.
Finally, we have learned these past few months that there are ways to work and play without leaving home at all, so consider maintaining at least some of these habits once the pandemic has abated since they can greatly benefit the environment through reduced time on the road. Also, consider donating the corresponding savings in gas money to charity.

**Eco-Friendly Driving Tips**

- **Slow down.** Wind resistance grows the faster you drive, especially above 50 mph. For this reason, at these speeds increasing your speed by 5 mph costs roughly an additional $0.15 per gallon of gas.

- **Use cruise control.** Variations in acceleration and braking on the highway burns excessive gas, and these are mitigated when cruise control is employed.

- **Accelerate lightly.** Engines are designed to have a peak efficiency around 4,000-5,000 rpm for small and mid-sized engines, and exceeding these values wastes gas. In addition, resist the urge for heavy acceleration out of the gate when a traffic light turns green.
• **Stay cool in traffic.** When you are in traffic, you can save up to 40% in gas by allowing the car to inch forward on its own and avoiding the desire to repeatedly accelerate and brake. Similarly, avoid heavy braking and acceleration when driving through a series of speed bumps.

• **Switch gears early.** If driving a manual transmission, switch to a higher gear when the revolutions are at a lower value (2,000 rpm for a typical gasoline engine).

• **Be aware of the road.** Before you decide to accelerate, look ahead a couple blocks to see if there is a red light, a stop sign, or any other reason to cause you to slow down or stop.

• **Use driver feedback.** Recent studies have shown that employing driver feedback devices can increase your gas mileage by up to 10%.

• **Stay in your lane.** Changing lanes often will not significantly reduce travel time, so frequent lane changes with their corresponding periods of acceleration wastes gas and decreases safety.

• **Limit the idling.** Idling, especially with the air conditioner on, can consume up to half a gallon of gas per hour, and turning on your car only consumes about 10 seconds worth of fuel. Consider turning off the car instead of sitting in an idling car for long periods of time.

Further reading:


ECHO GIVING IN THE WORLD – SUPPORTING MISSION

Holidays will certainly be different during this year marked by a continuing pandemic. But some traditions continue, even if they have to adapt to changing circumstances. For those who may not be familiar, ECHO Giving in the World is a program started at Westminster that offers an option to the usual gift giving. No trips to the mall or browsing the web; no packages to worry about!

You can give a meaningful and urgently needed gift to someone in need, either locally or globally. Visit http://www.wpc.org/uploads/ECHO-Giving-Form-2020.pdf for the form, which also includes instructions for securely giving online. Due to the pandemic, gift cards are not available at the church, but there is printable card on page three from the link above.

Simply make your selection from the shopping list (instructions are on the back) and you have given a meaningful gift, in your loved one’s name, to one of God’s children in need. Rest assured that 100% of your money goes directly to the mission you choose as described on the shopping list.

Choose one (or several) of 13 missions, from local (for example, Friendship House helping people transition from homelessness) to global (for example, educating young women in Congo to become healthcare providers). ECHO support is valuable; ECHO funds have been part of a great outpouring of compassion for those in our target countries who have become food insecure as a result of the pandemic. For more information or questions, email echo@wpc.org.
PROPERTY NEWS: WHO IS THAT MASKED MAN?

Did the hair give it away? The eyes? Or the pen in his breast pocket? It’s Jim Carter, a stalwart of Westminster’s Phix-It Corps. Over the years, Jim and his Phix-It colleagues have contributed thousands of hours of “sweat equity” to the church. Their efforts are visible throughout the building, from the LED bulbs in every fixture to Gary Bryde’s marbleized columns.

The original goals of the group, established by Dick Geuder and Sue Linderman, remain its guiding star. To paraphrase the words of longtime member Jeff Lippincott, the Phix-It Corps brings people together in Christian fellowship to care for God’s house. By volunteering their time and talents, they reduce expenditures at Westminster and make it possible to devote more funds to mission work.

Jim Carter illustrates the dedication of the group. Jim’s roots are local. He attended Mount Pleasant High School, where he met Polly, and, as they say, the rest is history. They were married in 1983 and nine years later he joined Westminster. Polly had grown up in the church, so for Jim the transition from newcomer to fully engaged member was swift. He served six-year terms in succession as a deacon, elder, and trustee. He remains an active participant on the Property Committee and Urban Mission Committee. You’ve surely seen him during his frequent stints as an usher or met him and Polly during
their years of collecting food for the Hanover Presbyterian Church Food Pantry. Some of you may remember his work in helping to build houses for Habitat for Humanity or the work groups he led to New Orleans to repair houses after Hurricane Katrina.

Not long after Jim arrived at Westminster, Dick Geuder asked him to join the Phix-It Corps. This invitation led to a 20-year commitment, which thankfully continues to this day. Most recently, Jim installed plexiglass barriers at the reception desk and built a table for the computer equipment needed to film services in the sanctuary. Jim has always been available to help — and he's done so with a welcome laugh and a warm heart. The Phix-It Corps — and indeed the entire congregation — have benefited from his generous spirit. All of us have the opportunity to serve Westminster in a multitude of ways. One couldn’t ask for better role models than Jim and Polly Carter.
IN-PERSON WORSHIP

In October, we joyfully reopened our sanctuary for 9:00 a.m. worship on Sunday mornings. Seating is limited and a reservation (one per family) is REQUIRED. When we reach the maximum number of reservations we can host, the reservations close. We have established a number of guidelines for your safety, which include social distancing, wearing a facial mask/covering, and the use of no-touch sanitizing stations. In-person worship in the sanctuary does not replace our livestreamed/recorded options, which continue to be available on the homepage of our website (www.wpc.org) and our YouTube channel.

If you would like to join us for in-person worship, please subscribe to the Westminster Weekly Word e-newsletter to get the online reservation link. You may subscribe by going to the homepage of our website (www.wpc.org) and typing your email address in the orange box on the left hand side or by clicking this link.

If you do not have access to a computer and would like to make a reservation for worship, you may call Westminster staff member Cathy Lang at (302) 654-5214 ext. 129, Tuesday through Thursday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
WILL WE CANCEL IN-PERSON SUNDAY WORSHIP IN INCLEMENT WEATHER?

Weekly worship is essential to our well-being, so we try not to cancel Sunday worship due to inclement weather. One advantage Westminster has in snowy conditions is that we are located on a main artery in Wilmington, and the city generally does a good job of clearing Pennsylvania Avenue. In addition, we can have our parking lot plowed and our entrances cleared. However, we are concerned about your safety and do not want you to slip on ice or have an accident due to slippery roads. Some live near main streets that are plowed, but others have great difficulty getting to a main road.

Therefore, if we have a snowstorm but do not cancel in-person worship for those who have a reservation, please use your own judgment. If you are comfortable driving in the snow and will not put yourself in jeopardy, we welcome you to attend worship. If you stay at home, tune in to our livestreamed/recorded service on our YouTube channel, which can be accessed by going to the homepage of our website (www.wpc.org) and clicking on the link under the “Sunday Worship” section or clicking on the red YouTube icon on the right hand side.

If the weather is bad enough that our clergy and worship participants cannot make it into the church, consider setting aside time to pray and to read (or watch) and reflect on a past sermon, which can be found on our website at www.wpc.org/sermons.

If in-person worship is cancelled, a message will be on the church phone (302-654-5214) and the homepage of our website (www.wpc.org).
YEAR-END GIVING

Thank you for your 2020 donations! Your contributions really do make a difference. It would be very beneficial if you could complete your 2020 pledge before the end of the year. Contribution statements were sent out in October, but do not hesitate to contact Colleen Falasco, Director of Financial Operations, at cfalasco@wpc.org or (302) 654-5214 ext. 131 if you have any questions.

The church office will be open December 29, 30 and 31 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. All donations POSTMARKED on or before December 31, 2020 will be credited to your contribution record as received in 2020, so there is no need to physically drop off donations by December 31 to receive credit.

Secure online donations can be made until December 23 for 2020 year-end giving.

Appreciated stock can also be donated to the church. Please make any stock transfers no later than December 15 to allow sufficient processing time for year-end. Contact Colleen for more information.

CHURCH OFFICE
HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

The Westminster church office will be closed for the Christmas and New Year holidays on:

Thursday, December 24, 2020 (office closes at 12:00 noon)

Friday, December 25, 2020

Friday, January 1, 2021
FLYING SOLO

Flying Solo is a group of single adults who meet to support each other in friendship, through social activities and fellowship.

Due to the coronavirus outbreak, Flying Solo has suspended its activities for the foreseeable future. While we miss gathering as a group and seeing each other, once it is considered safe, our Sunday brunches and other activities will resume.

If you would like to be added to our email list, please contact Bill Kaye at billkaye3@verizon.net.

RECENT DEATHS

Those Who Have Joined the Church Triumphant

We remember the families of those who recently died. We pray that they will be comforted in their loss and be assured that their loved ones have joined God’s heavenly kingdom.

Ellen Aiman Clarke
August 7, 1931 – October 14, 2020

Thomas M. Eliason, Jr.
September 12, 1922 – October 25, 2020
Pastors
The Rev. Dr. Gregory K. Jones
The Rev. Sudie Niesen Thompson
The Rev. Jill Getty

WPC Director of Marketing and Communications
Nicole D. Hughes

Graphic Design by
Trellist Marketing & Technology

Next Chimes Deadline:
Monday, December 7, at 11:00 a.m.
For the January/February 2021 Issue
Submissions can be made at
www.wpc.org/communications

Merry Christmas
AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!