

WESTMINSTER WITNESS

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Reverend Joseph Hein

FEBRUARY

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My Family in Christ,

Lent invites us to remember the profound events of Jesus' passion, death, and glorious resurrection. It is an invitation to Christians to deepen their faith and commitment to following the beautiful path of Jesus.

With this introduction, I invite you to prepare your hearts, minds, and spirits for a Holy Lent that begins on Wednesday, February 26th. Please set aside time on Ash Wednesday to worship at 12 noon or 7:30 pm.

Ashes will be offered at both services. Ashes remind us that we don't live forever (on earth!), and that God holds both life and death in his strong and able hands.

In Lent, rather than giving something up as many do, Presbyterian Christians often add something. You may want to commit yourself to adding something that will deepen your faith. For instance, you may want to add daily Bible reading or attending Wednesday Night Live; or volunteering to work in a homeless shelter; or cutting back on your spending and giving the savings to poor.

Lent creates a new path that takes us from some of the tired and worn places in our life of faith to the joy of Easter and resurrection faith. Lent is an opportunity to reconnect with God, to rediscover a spiritual life, and to change more into the likeness of Christ.

May God richly bless you this Lent with a deepened and renewed faith, hope, and love.

Pastor Joe

LENT AT WESTMINSTER

ASH WEDNESDAY

FEBRUARY 26TH

The wonderful 40 day season of Lent and spiritual renewal begins on Wednesday, February 26th with 2 services of worship at noon and 7:30 pm.

COUNTERFEIT GODS

A Lenten Study on Idolatry

By Tim Keller

Success, money, true love, and the life you've always wanted. Many of us place our faith in these things, believing they hold the key to happiness.

In Counterfeit Gods, Keller defines modern idolatry. It is anything more important to you than God, anything that absorbs your heart and imagination more than God, anything you seek to give you what only God can give.

Please join us for an hour on Sunday afternoons in Lent to discover the hidden idols in your life, and finding and replacing them.

FIRST COMMUNION TRAINING

A two hour First Communion training class for children 7 and above will be held on Saturday, March 21st from 10am to noon in Harlan Hall. The aim of the class is to prepare children in the practice and understanding of the Sacrament of Holy Communion. They will receive the Sacrament for the first time on Sunday, April 12th - Easter Sunday. Pastor Joe will lead the class.

Please call the church office at 732.671.2585 to register your child.

Xbox Tournament



Westminster will host an Xbox Tournament on Saturday, February 29th from 1-4 pm in Harlan Hall for Westminster kids and their friends in grades 4-8. The Xbox tournament will be the first event in a series of activities for young people in grades 4-8. We encourage our kids to invite one friend to the event. A pizza dinner will be served after the championship game.

CROSSROADS COFFEE HOUSE

Friday, March 16th 7-9pm

Save the date! The next Crossroads Café Coffee House will be held on Friday, March 16th. Doors open at 7pm in Harlan Hall. Refreshments will be provided.



DEACONS SPAGHETTI LUNCHEON



The Deacon's Annual Spaghetti Luncheon will be held on Sunday, March 8th after worship in Harlan Hall. The Spaghetti is the main fundraiser for the Deacons and a great fellowship event for the congregation. Please generously support the Deacon's ministry with your presence at the luncheon and free will offering.

WESTMINSTER'S ANNUAL MEETING

February 23rd



Westminster's Annual Meeting to elect new church officers, review the 2020 budget and last year's committee reports will take place in the Sanctuary on Sunday, February 23rd immediately after worship. A brief and entertaining slide show of our life together will precede the meeting.



Sunday, March 1

Newly elected Elders and Deacons will be Installed and Ordained (where necessary) to their respective offices of service in this unique rite of the Presbyterian Church, USA. Snow date is Sunday, March 8.

CHANCEL SPACE TO HAVE NEW LOOK

After study and reflection, and with session's unanimous approval, planning is underway to reconfigure the space where the Communion Table, Pulpit, and Lectern are positioned. The new arrangement of space will visibly express the central importance of the relation between Word and Sacrament and its centrality to worship.

The piano will be moved to the opposite side of the Chancel, near to the organ. The choir will be repositioned to occupy the space where the piano is presently located.

Also, new carpeting in the Chancel space will replace the dangerously bunched and stained existing carpet.

The new focal point of Westminster's worship space will be the Communion Table, beautiful window, and large overhead Cross.

CHURCH TO PURCHASE STORAGE SHED

We're growing! and so are the demands for storage space. The session has tasked the Property Committee at its January meeting to gather cost estimates for a storage shed. The new shed will be located in the same general area as the other.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS NEEDED FOR FAITH, HOPE & MUSIC FESTIVAL



Dear WPC congregation - so far, we have been able to host the Faith, Hope & Music Festival outdoor concert day 3 years running with this past year being the best one yet! If you have enjoyed attending and/or helping out with these events in the past, we need your help to continue it in the future. We are looking for a committee of about 5-6 people to facilitate all of the necessary preparations this event requires. Some duties will include filling out paperwork for the necessary permits (tent, food, 50/50) and submitting them by their associated deadlines, coordinating with potential food vendors, making arrangements for the

bake sale, info table, kids' activities, or anything else that will be happening on site. If the event does indeed run again this year, it would be held on the Saturday of Rally Day weekend- Sept. 12th, 4-7pm. As you can see, there are many moving parts to coordinate behind the scenes to make a large event like this happen so if you'd like to help us continue to run this evangelical day of fun for the church and the community at large, please contact Erika Sayar at esayarwpc@gmail.com or at 732-671-2585 to volunteer. For any interested volunteers we will have an organizational meeting Sunday, March 1st immediately following the Sunday service.

MUSIC CORNER

Hello WPC! I'd like to start submitting a small monthly article to the newsletter that discusses some portion of music in worship. Whether it is the back story of a favorite hymn or an informative note on the role of music in worship or something interesting, like what are those funny shoes I have to wear when playing the organ! I hope you'll find these anecdotes informational and interesting! I thought I'd start this month with a functional text- why we have the music we have during the service and its true purpose.

The service begins and ends each week with a solo on the piano or the organ in the form of a Prelude and Postlude. The music selected for these pieces of the service (because they are indeed part of the service, not an afterthought), are selected with the meaning of the day's scriptures and message in mind. The Prelude should reflect the tone of the day and provide a couple of minutes of meditation time during which we can quietly prepare our hearts to worship in the spirit of the day. The Postlude should also send us on our way in that same spirit of joy or reflection or kindness, etc. I would encourage you to take a listen, if you don't already, and see if either of those pieces help aid you in your worship of our Lord. The introit, which we use seasonally, is a choral statement, usually based on the lectionary Gospel reading for that day, again to set our minds in the direction of the message we'll be listening for during the service. The opening and closing hymns are designed to gather us together as a congregation, unified in our love of Christ and are also seasonally based. The middle hymn is generally speaking a more meditative hymn used to reflect on the words of scripture and the sermon that we have just heard. The anthem or special music should again reinforce the readings of the day and help us to connect with the words of our Lord in a different way as sometimes our hearts need different approaches to be opened to our Lord.

As Pastor Joe mentioned in a sermon recently, God can be found in various ways throughout the service if we are open to the possibility. And isn't it wonderful when a particular piece of music turns into an "ear worm" and sends us out into our day with God's words on our lips? That is the angels whispering their songs in our ear that we may feel God's love in the midst of our ordinary days. Both the Bible and the Book

of Order call us to sing and play our praises to the Lord our God and music is therefore an integral part of worship, both because it is indeed required by our God Himself and also because it can provide a path to a heart of worship that sometimes the spoken word might not be able to reach on its own. God bless and I hope that God will speak to you in the music here at WPC!

MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

St Mark's Breakfast

Mission Committee will be preparing breakfast at St. Mark's in Keansburg on Saturday, February 29th.

Family promise

We will meet in Harlan Hall Saturday, February 29 at 3:00 p.m. to cook a complete dinner and deliver the food to Christ Church by 5:30 p.m. All are welcome to join us including children at least 10 years of age.

Please join in on these Mission opportunities.

DEACON FOOD PANTRY **Items for February**

Instant Potatoes, Stuffing, Soup, Hot and Cold Cereal, Mayo, Peanut Butter and Jelly.

He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. John 21:16 KJV



How to Access Our Food Pantry

The food pantry in Harlan Hall is kept stocked through the generosity of and for the benefit of Westminster members and the community at large. Should an emergency arise and a member or someone from the community needs food, call either Lori at the church office or Pastor Joe at 732.671.2585 (your call will be kept in complete confidence). They will notify the Moderator of the Deacons, Alyssa Cuttrell, and she will put together the parcels. The groceries may be picked up immediately in some cases or as early the next day by arrangement with either Pastor Joe or Alyssa.

2020 PER CAPITA

As members of Westminster Presbyterian Church, our allotment for 2020 is \$40.00 per member. In your envelope box, there is an envelope marked per capita.