

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

3208 Exposition Boulevard

Austin, TX 78703

512-459-5497

www.wpcaustin.org

Connections @ Westminster

December 6 - 20, 2009

All New This Week

[Weekly Word](#)

[Calendar](#)

[Prayer Requests](#)

[Annual Greening of the Sanctuary & Pancake Supper](#) -- **Sunday, Dec. 6**

[Christmas Party at Austin State School](#) – **December 16**

[Last Chance to Order Tamales](#) -- **December 6 is last date to order!**

[Into the Darkest Hour](#) December 13 at the 11:00 a.m. Worship Service

[Stewardship Update](#)

[Christmas Benevolence Funds](#)

[Minter Alternative Christmas Gift Market Continues.....](#)

[Christmas Eve Worship Services](#)

[Sunday Morning Adult Ed. Opportunities](#)

[Theology on Tap](#)

From Previous Connections

[Remember to Bring Food for Manos de Cristo](#) -- **Sunday, Dec. 6**

[Poinsettias for the Sanctuary](#)

[Manos de Cristo Needs Clothes](#)

[Flowers in Worship](#)

[Landscaping Work Day – Dress for Dirt](#)

[Advent Devotional Guide](#)

Regular Attractions

[Worship - Are You an After-Church Elder, Greeter, Cookie Host, Acolyte?](#)

[Are You Scheduled to Deliver Flowers After 11 a.m. Worship?](#) – **No flower delivery during Advent**

[Mission](#)

[Children's Ministries](#)

[Youth Ministries](#)

[Adult Ministries](#)

[Fellowship](#)

[Daily Scripture Readings](#)

Weekly Word

Dear Fellow Followers of the Way.

We have entered Advent, a time of waiting, a time of preparation. It is a season full of ritual. As we gather on Sunday, we light the candles on the Advent wreath. The songs that we sing change with the season. The first week of Advent we look to the return of Christ and the second week we hear the words of John the Baptist calling us to “prepare the way of the Lord.” All of this leads to the final days and weeks of Advent as we turn to the very familiar story.

As we experience the texts, the music and the rituals of the season, we need to let ourselves get drawn more fully into the season. We need to let the rhythms of gathering together, the sounds of the season, draw us deeper and deeper into the experience. All of the texts, rituals and songs will help lead us to a deeper understanding of the radical act of God’s love in incarnation of Christ.

This is a season for watching, for waiting, and for preparing. Let us keep the watch together joining in song and in wonder this Advent season. I invite you to be a part of the many Advent traditions at Westminster this season. Sunday morning worship, Greening the Sanctuary, Advent calendars for families to count down the days and the Advent devotional that is coming by email are all avenues to help us seek the Christ child. Through all of this we are joined with one another and with brothers and sisters around the world who keep the watch with us.

Blessings to everyone this Advent season!

Grace, Mercy, and Peace,
Karen

Calendar

Dec 6 - Sun		Second Sunday in Advent	
	08:30 AM	Worship / Communion	Sanctuary
	09:40 AM	Church School (for all ages)	
	10:40 AM	Fellowship	Fellowship Hall
	11:00 AM	Worship / Communion	Sanctuary
	04:00 PM	Greening of the Sanctuary & Pancake Supper	Sanctuary
Dec 7 - Mon	12:00 PM	Property Committee	Room 10
	07:00 PM	Worship Committee	Library
Dec 8 - Tue	09:30 AM	WPDS Church Times	Sanctuary
	10:00 AM	Staff Meeting	Pastor's Study
	10:30 AM	Tuesday Circle	Library
	12:00 PM	Adventures Christmas Potluck/GBATTS	Room 10
	05:30 PM	Admin/Finance Committee	
Dec 9 - Wed	09:30 AM	WPDS Church Times	Sanctuary
	07:00 PM	Adult Choir	Choir Room
	07:00 PM	Officer Training	Room 10
Dec 10 - Thu	12:15 PM	Mid-day Prayers	Sanctuary

	01:00 PM	Thursday Circle	Annex
Dec 11 - Fri	11:45 AM	Friday Circle	Offsite
Dec 13 - Sun		Third Sunday in Advent	
	08:30 AM	Worship / Communion	Sanctuary
	09:40 AM	Church School (for all ages)	
	10:40 AM	Fellowship	Fellowship Hall
	11:00 AM	Worship	Sanctuary
	05:00 PM	Youth Fellowship	Annex
Dec 14 - Mon	05:30 PM	Human Resources Committee	Pastor's Study
	05:45 PM	Diaconate Christmas Party	Offsite
Dec 15 - Tue	10:00 AM	Staff Meeting	Pastor's Study
	02:00 PM	Mission Committee of Presbytery	Library
	07:00 PM	Session	Room 10
Dec 16 - Wed	10:00 AM	WPDS Las Posadas	Sanctuary
	12:00 PM	WPDS Staff Christmas Luncheon	Fellowship Hall
	07:00 PM	Adult Choir	Choir Room
Dec 17 - Thu	12:15 PM	Mid-day Prayers	Sanctuary

Last Chance to Order Tamales!

Manos des Cristo is our Presbyterian mission helping the working poor in Austin. You can support this important mission and enjoy wonderful homemade tamales by ordering now! **Sunday, December 6 is the last date** to place your order.

Tamales are available in pork, bean, jalapeño pork, and chicken, and are **\$10 per dozen**. **Tamales must be picked up on Friday, Dec. 11, between 12 noon and 3 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.**

Greening of the Sanctuary and Pancake Supper – This Sunday

Everyone is invited to come to the church on Dec. 6, beginning at **4 p.m.** to participate in the Greening of the Sanctuary. Come enjoy decorating the church for Advent by hanging the wreaths on the outside doors, hanging the swags in the narthex, hanging the wreaths in the sanctuary, and decorating the windows and swags, placing the crosses on the tree in the narthex and more! There will be jobs and activities for the entire family. Following the decorating and a brief service of worship we will gather in the Fellowship Hall for a pancake supper prepared by the Westminster men. What a great way to begin the Advent season!

Christmas Party at Austin State School – December 16

Each Christmas season, Westminster Presbyterian Church hosts a Christmas Party for two resident homes at the Austin State School, our neighbors across Exposition Boulevard. We bring food and gifts for the residents, sing some Christmas carols, and have a good time sharing God's love during the Christmas season. This year the party is scheduled on Wednesday, **December 16, 2001, from 6:00-7:30 p.m.**

We have already received Christmas gift lists from our friends at the State School. There are 14 women and 14 men who have requested small items for gifts. We need volunteers to do one or more of the following:

- buy and wrap the gifts
- bring food; and
- go to the school for the party

If you want to volunteer to buy gifts, bring food or go to the party, look for the sign-up sheet in the Narthex. If you have questions or need information, call Randy Cain at 637-4994, or email at rcain@rcainlaw.com.

Stewardship Update: *Connecting to God, One Another and the World*

Thank you to all who have participated in this year's stewardship campaign. Over **147** members and member families have pledged **\$588,490** for the 2010 general fund. Together these members have increased their giving by 24%! They are grateful for the connections that God has provided at Westminster and for the opportunities that we have to be God's people in this place. They are also supportive of our plan to include the debt service of the new Fellowship Hall in our 2010 budget and to provide strong support for mission inside and outside the walls of our church.

We are well on our way to reaching our \$756,000 pledge goal, but we obviously need full participation by Westminster members and friends to reach that goal. 2010 pledge cards and Time and Talent forms are available at the church. If you have not already done so, we encourage you to bring this information with you to worship on Sunday morning and place it in the offering plate, or mail it to the church office. You may also email this information to our church accountant, Jimmie Grossman, at wpcadmin@wpcastin.org. **Prompt return of this information greatly assists us in our planning for 2010.**

Music for the Season

The Westminster Sanctuary Choir will present *Into the Darkest Hour* at the 11:00 a.m. worship service on Sunday, December 13. The presentation will include works by such poets as Christina Rossetti and Madaleine L'Engle and musical works by John Rutter, Randall Thompson, and Tomas Victoria.

Christmas Benevolence Funds

Throughout Advent, Westminster will again be providing blessings directly to people in need. If you know someone who needs assistance, please sign up in the church office for the Christmas Benevolence Program. The church will reimburse members up to \$300 in expenses for such things as food, clothing, payment for utility bills, car repairs, rent, etc., for those in need who do not qualify for public assistance. Once the monies have been spent, receipts can be turned in to the church office for reimbursement. Be sure to tell recipients that the help is from Westminster in gratefulness for God's blessings. Call the church accountant for more information, 459-5497.

Minter Alternative Christmas Gift Market continues.....

The Christmas season for celebrating our gifts from God started with a very festive Minter Market in Fellowship Hall on Sunday, November 22. Twelve colorful booths representing giving opportunities in Austin and around the world were visited by those who attended. Over 75 persons donated approximately \$8,897.00 to the groups represented at the Market. Fair Trade products sold totaled about \$450.00. Tamales ordering was brisk!

The opportunity is still available to make a contribution (December 15 is the last day for this year!) through the Minter Market and bestow a blessing on a friend or family member. Shopping lists can be picked up from the display in the narthex, selections can be made, and dropped off in the church office. Folded notes and descriptive cards can be picked up in the office (or we will deliver them to you!).

Christmas Eve Worship Services Thursday, Dec. 24

*6 p.m. - Family Candlelight Service and Communion
(Childcare available)*

*8 p.m. - Service of Lessons and Carols
Candlelight Service and Communion*

From Previous *Connections*

Poinsettias for the Sanctuary

Every year we have the opportunity to contribute toward furnishing our sanctuary with poinsettias during the Advent and Christmas seasons. This year we have ordered red poinsettias that may be given in honor of friends or family or in memory of loved ones. A donation of \$12 per plant will cover the cost to the church. Donors will be recognized in the Christmas Eve order of worship.

Please print out the order form below and turn it in to the WPC office along with your check made payable to Westminster Presbyterian Church (memo "poinsettias") by December 13. Order forms will also be available in the narthex. In addition, you may contact the church office (459-5497) if you do not have the opportunity to pick up a form at a Sunday worship service or have problems printing out the form. The Worship Committee invites you to participate in this lovely tradition.

Poinsettias for the Sanctuary

(Please print legibly)

of poinsettias @ \$12 _____

Given by _____

In honor of _____

In memory of _____

Landscaping Work Day: Dress for Dirt

Do you like to play in the dirt? Do you like working in the yard? Do you need to log community service hours for high school? All church members and friends may join us for a Landscaping Work Day Saturday morning December 5 from 9 AM to 12 noon. Dress for dirt and bring all, some, or none of the following: yard waste bags, lopping shears, pruning shears, shovels, gloves, weather-appropriate clothing, and enthusiasm. Our main task is to remove mosquito-harboring primrose jasmine from the south side of the education building, prune some perennials, and do a bit of planting and weeding. No expertise or experience is necessary. Park on Exposition Blvd. or in the church parking lot and meet at the circle drive. Cold water and snacks will be provided. R.S.V.P. to the church office at 459-5497 or wpc@wpcaustin.org or just show up!

Advent Devotional Guides – 2009

As we enter the season of Advent, we turn our sights to preparing for the coming of Christ, by both remembering his birth, and watching for that day when God's reign will be complete, and God's will is done on earth as it is in heaven. We do this in many ways, but none are as significant as reading Scripture, reflecting on God's Word, and prayer. This year, Westminster's Advent Devotional Guide will be a weekly one: with suggested Scripture readings for each day, a meditation on which you may reflect for the week, a prayer for the week, and words for a service of lighting Advent candles if you have an Advent Wreath at home. **Each week, you will receive each the devotional guide via-email, either the Thursday or the Friday prior to the upcoming week. If you do not have e-mail, you will receive hard copies with the issue of *Connections* that is mailed to your home.** It is our prayer that these offerings will aid you in your prayers, and in your preparation for the gift that will be given to us yet again this Christmas, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Copies of Advent Reflections from the Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary community are available in the narthex at church.

Sign up for Flowers in Worship

The 2010 Flower Calendar is up in the church office waiting for you to sign up for a special Sunday to furnish flowers for worship. Many people give flowers in thanksgiving for blessings received, in honor of a loved one, in celebration of an event, or in memory of a saint who was dear to them. Whatever your reason is the flowers which you give to the church not only enhance our worship space but also are delivered to Westminster shut-ins on Sunday afternoons, a double blessing.

You may reserve your Sunday by calling the church office, 459-5497 or emailing wpc@wpcaustin.org or by contacting Amy Ehrlich at aehrlich6@sbcglobal.net.

Manos de Cristo Needs Clothes

The Manos Clothes closet has an extreme need for **children and men's clothing!** As you clean your closets to prepare for the holidays, remember the Manos Clothes Closet. The need at Manos continues to grow, as we are seeing more and more people each day. Please consider making donations to Manos de Cristo.

Worship

Sunday, December 6

Second Sunday of Advent

Preacher: Bill Clark

Liturgists: Kathy Anderson, Robert Quiring

Scripture: Malachi 3:1-4; Luke 1:68-79; Luke 3:1-6

Those Serving as After-Church Elders, Greeters, Cookie Hosts, Acolytes, and After-Church Flower Deliverer:

After Church Elders: Bob Schriber, David Rose, Grover Campbell

Greeters: South Door, Cynthia and Stan Shaw; North Door, O. R. Schmidt and Connie Moore

Cookie Hosts: Marian Robertson and Amy and David Rose

Acolytes: Madison Tyson and Elizabeth Tyson

After-Church Flower Deliverer: No flower delivery

Sunday, December 13

Third Sunday of Advent

The Westminster Choir will present *Into the Darkest Hour*, a series of Advent and Christmas poems and music at the 11:00 a.m. service.

Preacher: Robert Quiring (8:30)

Liturgists: Kathy Anderson, Bill Clark

Those Serving as After-Church Elders, Greeters, Cookie Hosts, Acolytes, and After-Church Flower Deliverer:

After Church Elders: Jim Lockart, Cindy Sullivan, Corrinne Bowers

Greeters: South Door, Pat and Ben Boswell; North Door, Terry Allbright and Mike Rush

Cookie Hosts: Mary Margaret Sheffield and Larry Wise

Acolytes: Robert Ehrlich and Adelaide Ehrlich

After-Church Flower Deliverer: No flower delivery

Adult Ministries

Adult church school, Sunday mornings 9:40 – 10:40 a.m.
the WPC website!

For more detailed descriptions, please visit

Forum Class – Fellowship Hall

The Scandal of the Manger

Dr. Cindy Rigby

In preparation for the class, Cindy has asked that interested participants reflect on the *Magnificat* in Luke 1:46-55.

December 6: *The Shocking Truth About Us*
December 13: *The Shocking News for all the World*
December 20: *On the Way to Bethlehem*

Bible Study & Thoughtful Christian
(November 29 – December 20)

Will meet with the Forum Class during Advent

MYConnection Class – Room 10

"Advent Through the Eyes of Those Who Waited"

This class will focus on some familiar biblical characters found in the lectionary readings for Advent:

December 6: John the Baptist announces the coming of the Messiah. (Brian Moore)

December 13: Mary, the mother of Jesus, teaches us about patience and courage. (Brian Moore)

December 20: From Elizabeth, we learn how to accept a blessing so long in coming that it is no longer expected.
(Martha Richardson)

Children's Ministries

Preschoolers: Preschoolers start in Room 14 for Song Time and the teachers will pick them up and take them to their classrooms. The children may be picked up in their room at the end of Sunday school. 2/3's will be in room 5 and the 4's/K's in room 4. Your child must be 2 by August 1st to be in the 2 year old class. Younger children may be taken to the nursery.

A **NURSERY** for our littlest members is in Room 2, staffed by a caring and trained team of child care workers. Children of all ages are welcome in worship at Westminster. The nursery, located in Room 2 of the Education Wing is available for infants through 5 years old.

Godly Play for Preschoolers on Sunday Morning

Children of all ages are welcome in worship at Westminster. We understand, however, that sometimes children grow restless, so during the 11 a.m. worship service, as a part of caring for our youngest saints, we offer a nursery for infants and Godly Play for 3-5 year olds. Godly Play will begin at 11:15, but children may join us at any time after the Passing of the Peace. We ask that parents wait outside Room 13 after worship for children to be dismissed.

Elementary Age Children: Dwelling Places meets in Room 13.

Nov 29-Dec 20 **Advent – Watch, Repent, Rejoice and Love**

Youth Ministries

Church School classes for all youth meet each Sunday morning, in the Annex, located at the corner of Carlton and Hillview, just beyond the church parking lot.

Save the Date

Dec 6th – All Church Greening of the Sanctuary @ 4pm

Dec 13th – Christmas games

Dec 20th – Progressive/Regressive dinner

Youth Mid-winters 2010 – **Karen has registration forms. Forms are DUE Dec 8th**

January 15-17 Midwinter #1 Middle School

January 22-24 Midwinter #2 Senior High

High School Mission Trip Summer 2010 – June 20th – June 26th – To Texas City for Hurricane Clean up with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.

Middle School (Grades 6 - 7)

Meets in the Annex Living Room

Topic: I Know My Bible

Senior High (Grades 9 - 12)

Meets in the Annex Red Room

Topic: A variety of resources focusing on our lives, current events, questions, and the role of faith in our lives.

* * * * *

Fellowship

Theology on Tap – Thursday, January 7 @ 7 p.m., Location TBA – watch your e-mails! Join us for conversation, drink (your choice), food and fellowship!

Adventures meets Tuesday, December 8 @ Noon in Fellowship Hall

The GBATTs are coming! Join us for our Christmas gathering as we enjoy the voices of folks who are Getting Better All The Time (GBATTs)!

Come at noon.

Bring your lunch – a pot luck dish to share.

Bring a friend.

Enjoy the fellowship.

Don't miss it!

Mission

Bring Food for Manos de Cristo on Sunday, December 6 – Always the 1st Sunday of the Month!

Manos always needs food. Bring non-perishable food Sunday, **December 6.** And as we are fed at our Lord's table, we remember to feed others in need! Please remember to give for those who have less than we do.

[Westminster Presbyterian Church](#), organized in 1947, is a congregation of [Mission Presbytery](#), the [Synod of the Sun](#), and the [Presbyterian Church \(U.S.A.\)](#).