

# WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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## Connections @ Westminster

December 20, 2009 – January 10, 2010

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# Weekly Word

Dear Friends,

During the early Christmas Eve service our children will sing, “He came down that we might have love. Alleluia forever more!” That evening they will help us proclaim the mystery and the marvel of the gospel as only children can: God has come to be with us in a baby named Jesus, God’s Word was made flesh.

This doctrine of the incarnation declares that God came down to be with us and for us. God has descended to our level in Jesus to teach us, to show us mercy, and ultimately to redeem us. God has become like us, so that we might become more like God, walking in the light, filled with grace and truth, showing kindness and mercy to others as God has shown it to us.

In 1535 the reformer, Martin Luther, composed a hymn with this mystery in mind. *Von Himmel Hoch* (From Heaven High) was written for a children’s Christmas pageant and for Luther’s own children, eight-year-old Hans, and five-year-old Lenchen. The children sang:

*O Lord, who made and molded all, how did you come to be so small  
That you should lie upon dry grass, the fodder of the ox and ass?  
And if the world were twice as wide, with gold and precious jewels inside,  
Still such a cradle would not do to hold a babe as great as you.  
The velvet and the silken ruff, for these the hay is good enough.  
Here lies a prince and Lord of all, a king within as ass’s stall.  
You wanted so to make me know that you had let all great things go.  
You had a palace in the sky; you left it there for such as I.  
O dear Lord Jesus, for your head now will I make the softest bed.  
The chamber where the bed shall be is in my heart, inside of me.*

The carols of Christmas proclaim that God has come to be with us even and especially in our ordinary, mundane lives. May our voices join with the children and the choirs of angels in singing praise. Alleluia forever more!

Gratefully yours,

Bill

## Calendar

Dec 20 - Sun	08:30 AM	Worship / Communion	Sanctuary
	09:40 AM	Church School (for all ages)	Westminster
	10:40 AM	Fellowship	Fellowship Hall
	11:00 AM	Worship	Sanctuary
	05:00 PM	Youth Fellowship/Progressive Dinner	Offsite
Dec 24 - Thu	12:15 PM	Mid-day Prayers	Sanctuary
	06:00 PM	Family Christmas Eve Service	Sanctuary
	08:00 PM	Lessons & Carols Christmas Eve Service	Sanctuary
Dec 25 - Fri		Christmas/CHURCH OFFICES CLOSED Merry Christmas!	
Dec 27 - Sun	09:40 AM	Intergenerational Church School (for all ages)	Fellowship Hall

	10:40 AM	Fellowship	Fellowship Hall
	11:00 AM	Worship	Sanctuary
Dec 28 - Mon		CHURCH OFFICES CLOSED	
Dec 31 - Thu	12:15 PM	Mid-day Prayers	Sanctuary
Jan 1 - Fri		CHURCH OFFICES CLOSED - Happy New Year!	
Jan 3 - Sun	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
Jan 4 - Mon	12:00 PM	Property Committee	Room 10
	07:00 PM	Worship Committee	Library
Jan 5 - Tue	10:00 AM	Staff Meeting	Pastor's Study
	12:00 PM	Adventures	Fellowship Hall
Jan 7 - Thu	12:15 PM	Mid-day Prayers	Sanctuary
	06:30 PM	WPDS Board Meeting	Room 10
Jan 8 - Fri	11:45 AM	Friday Circle	Library
Jan 9 - Sat	08:30 AM	Officer's Retreat	Fellowship Hall

*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*

**Thank You from the Gillies Family**

Dear Westminster Friends,

John and I were moved to know many of the WNF group and others held a prayer vigil while we were having a memorial service for Laurie Yarbrough at 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, November 23. It was a time of praise to the triune God, whose love welcomes us all, even our "wild children" as a father with open arms! We felt the strength of the Holy Spirit giving us peace and comfort.

About a hundred friends from AA, Palmer Drug Program, neighborhood friends, and of course our church family gathered together to remember Laurie. Our own family were all present, so we had a Sunday Thanksgiving dinner. What a comforting support group! Thank you all, especially George Pryor, for leading the prayer group. You are dear to John and me.

Carolyn and John Gillies

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

Thank you to all who have participated in this year's stewardship campaign. Over **154** members and member families have pledged **\$610,290** 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@wpcaustin.org](mailto:wpcadmin@wpcaustin.org). **Prompt return of this information greatly assists us in our planning for 2010.**

## **No Connections @ Westminster the Week of Dec. 27**

Please note that this issue of Connections @ Westminster is for three weeks, Dec. 20 to January 10. The next issue of Connections will be snail mailed and emailed on Thursday, January 7.

## **Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the Westminster Church Staff**



*Bill Clark*

*Kathy Anderson*

*Karen Wagner*

*Rosemary Standerfer*

*Jimmie Grossman*

*Kitten Richter*

*Ray Chairez*

*Rick Colvin*

*Catherine Colvin*

*Byron Almén*

*Marta Woodard*

## **December 27 Worship and Church School**

There will be **no** 8:30 a.m. worship service on Sunday, Dec. 27. Join us that morning for a special Intergenerational Church School at 9:40 a.m. and worship at 11:00 a.m.

## **Notice of Congregational Meeting**

The Session of Westminster Presbyterian Church has called a congregational meeting for December 27 immediately following the 11 a.m. worship service. The purpose of this meeting is to hear a report from the Nominating Committee, and to elect an officer to fill an unexpired elder term for the Class of 2011.

## **Thank You's from Westminster College Students**

Dear Westminster youth, Bill, Kathy, and Karen,

Thank you so much for the wonderful care package! I was so pleasantly surprised. ☺ I really appreciate y'all's generosity and prayers. God has taught me so much this semester (stuff no college professor can teach!) He is so good and FAITHFUL! God bless y'all.

Love,  
Kathryn Taylor

Dear Karen,

I just wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed getting the care package that the youth group put together. It was a nice surprise to get while I was studying. I just finished taking all of my finals and I'm looking forward to Christmas break.

Thanks again and Merry Christmas!

Kira Lange

Dear Westminster Members,

Thank you so much for the finals care package. It found me at such a convenient time: snowed in, hungry, and out of groceries! It's so nice of you all to provide such a gesture from so far away, and the extra sugar gives an extra oomph through finals. Thanks again!

Sincerely,

Dan Lancaster

### **Library Display and Check-out in Fellowship Hall**

The church library now has a display and check-out table in the southeast "corner" of Fellowship Hall. You are welcome to check out books on display, signing your name on the card in the pocket on the inside back cover of the book and leaving the card in the basket on the table. Books may be returned to this basket as well.

Angela Oliver created the display, which will be a "permanent" feature in Fellowship Hall with changing displays and books. Thank you to Angela for this gift of her creativity and talent.

### **Bunk Beds Needed**

Westminster member, Brandy Wojcik, is searching for a set of bunk beds to provide for a family in need. Please contact her by email at [branlw@sbcglobal.net](mailto:branlw@sbcglobal.net). if you can provide the bedding.

## **From Previous *Connections***

### **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](mailto:wpc@wpcaustin.org) or by contacting Amy Ehrlich at [aehrich6@sbcglobal.net](mailto:aehrich6@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.

### **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.

# Worship

## Sunday, December 20

*Fourth Sunday of Advent*

**Preacher:** Kathy Anderson

**Liturgists:** Bill Clark, Robert Quiring

**Scripture:** Micah 5:2-5a; *Luke 1:47-55*; Hebrews 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-55

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

**After Church Elders:** Kim Edwards, Ann Scott, Linda Tyler

**Greeters:** South Door, Ann Scott and Miss Jane Smoot; North Door, Bonnie and Aoife O'Reilly

**Cookie Hosts:** Charlotte Trafton and Josie Whitley

**Acolytes:** Mary Elizabeth Taylor, Claudia Taylor

**After-Church Flower Deliverer:** No flower delivery

## Sunday, December 27

*First Sunday after Christmas*

**Preacher:** Bill Clark

**Liturgist:** 1 Samuel 2:18-20; Psalm 148; Colossians 3:12-17; Luke 2:41-52

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

**After Church Elders:** Todd Davidson, David Rose, Carolyn Long

**Greeters:** South Door, Marcia Kiger and Deborah Polan; North Door, Celia Bell and Claire Breihan

**Cookie Hosts:** Marcia Kiger and Marlene Magierski

**Acolytes:** Chris Clark, Reilly Bennett, Kirby Steckel

**After-Church Flower Deliverer:** No flower delivery

## Sunday, January 3

*Second Sunday after Christmas*

**Preacher:** Kathy Anderson

**Scripture:** Isaiah 60:1-6; *Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14*; Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12

**After Church Elders:** Jack Prince, Liz Jones, Debbie Mincher

**Greeters:** South Door, Kim Edwards and Doris Etheridge; North Door, Ryan McGinn and Sharon McGraw

**Cookie Hosts:** Kim Edwards and Cristia Moore

**Acolytes:** Louisa Ehrlich, Markley Ehrlich, Chance Polan

**After-Church Flower Deliverer:** Amy Hoffman

# 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 20:**

*On the Way to Bethlehem*

**December 27:**

*Intergenerational Gathering in Fellowship Hall – all ages and classes!*

**January 3:**

Steve Bowers

**January 10:**

Steve Bowers

## Bible Study – Room 9

**December 20:** With the Forum Class for the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

**December 27:** Intergenerational Gathering in Fellowship Hall – all ages and classes!

**January 3:** Bible Study resumes! Please read **Acts 14:1-16**

**January 10:** Acts 14:27 – 15:2

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

**December 27:** Intergenerational Gathering in Fellowship Hall – all ages and classes!

## 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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
Dec 27	Intergeneration Sunday School – Fellowship Hall
Jan 3-Jan 17	Micah

## 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 20<sup>th</sup> – Progressive/Regressive dinner  
Fellowship will NOT meet on December 27<sup>th</sup>, January 3 or January 10<sup>th</sup>.

Youth Mid-winters 2010 – **Karen has registration forms. Forms are DUE yesterday** 😊

January 15-17	Midwinter #1	Middle School
January 22-24	Midwinter #2	Senior High

**High School Mission Trip Summer 2010 – June 20<sup>th</sup> – June 26<sup>th</sup> – 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.

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## Fellowship

### Theology on Tap – Thursday, January 14

7 p.m. @ **Opal Divine's, 700 West 6<sup>th</sup> Street**

**(This is a week later than usual. We'll all be recovering from Christmas and New Year's festivities; and honestly, Texas vs. Alabama is on January 7!)**

**Topic: *Matthew Clayton*** (starring George Clooney)

### Thursday – February 4

7 p.m. @ **Opal Divine's, 700 West 6<sup>th</sup> Street**

**Topic: *Gran Torino*** (starring Clint Eastwood)

If you have a chance to watch the movies ahead of time, please do...but if you can't, don't stay away; there will be plenty to talk about.

Bring a friend, neighbor, or co-worker! **Opal Divine's is on West Sixth Street across from Katz's Deli. This is a great place; we have the upstairs room all to ourselves!**

Here's a link to the website if anyone wants to preview the menu:

<http://www.opaldivines.com/freehouse/index.html>

There is a parking lot in the back and lots of street parking as well within a block or two that is generally free. Suggestion: Why not meet at the church parking lot and carpool with others? Talk it up; ask around; the less vehicles we have to park the easier it will be.

**Adventures meets Tuesday, January 5 @ Noon in Fellowship Hall** – Join us as we enjoy Joe Culver sharing his cartoons with us.

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, January 3 – Always the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the Month!** **Manos always needs food.** Bring non-perishable food Sunday, **January 3.** 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 \(U.S.A.\)](#).