

SEPTEMBER 2026 | VOLUME 6 | ISSUE 3

STACK OF STONES

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

TRUST

HELD  IN

WPC Stewardship Campaign 2026

**THE NEWSLETTER
OF WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**

**SEPTEMBER 2026
VOLUME 6 NUMBER 3**

STACK OF STONES,
WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
NEWS
(USPS 25538) IS
PUBLISHED QUARTERLY
BY THE WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
4400 NORTH SHARTEL
AVENUE
OKLAHOMA CITY,
OKLAHOMA
73118

STACK OF STONES
HAS A CIRCULATION
OF APPROXIMATELY
FIFTEEN HUNDRED, AND
IS PRINTED IN-HOUSE.

PERIODICALS POSTAGE
PAID AT OKLAHOMA
CITY, OK

**POSTMASTER: SEND
ADDRESS CHANGES TO
WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH SHARTEL
CAMPUS
4400 NORTH SHARTEL
AVENUE
OKLAHOMA CITY,
OKLAHOMA
73118**

STACK OF STONES IS
AVAILABLE ONLINE AT:
WWW.WPCOKC.ORG

STACK OF STONES

Several times in the Bible, the people of God used the practice of stacking stones on top of one another. It was how the people remembered the way that God had acted to save them or make their lives better. This newsletter serves as a reminder and a testimony for us at Westminster of all the ways God has been faithful to us.

INDEX

- | | |
|----|----------------------|
| 1 | Rev. Landon Whitsitt |
| 3 | Spiritual Formation |
| 4 | Mid-Week Manna |
| 5 | Circles of Belonging |
| 6 | Youth |
| 7 | Big Faith Resources |
| 9 | Children's Ministry |
| 11 | Worship and the Arts |
| 12 | Congregational Care |
| 13 | Missions |
| 15 | Events |

ONE-SERVICE SUNDAYS

On the following Sundays, Westminster will gather for one worship service at 10:30am in the Sanctuary. There will be no 8:15am Chapel service. Sensory-Friendly Worship will continue at 10:30am in Frederickson Hall.

September 13
October 25
November 15

Launch Sunday
Reformation Sunday
Children's Sunday

WHAT WE HOLD,
WE HOLD TOGETHER.



A WORD FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Westies,

Every year, when the stewardship committee sits down for its first meeting, we end up having the same conversation.

Somebody at the table - usually someone newer, who came to us from another church or another tradition altogether - will ask a version of this: *What's the difference between a pledge and a tithe? And am I supposed to be doing one, or both, or neither?*

It's a good question, and it has never once been a naive one. Congregations talk about giving very differently from place to place. A word that meant one thing where you came from can mean something a little different here.

And here's the thing. If that question comes up around a committee table every single year, it is certainly being asked out in the pews. We just don't always get to hear it. Nobody should have to guess about this.

So let me take a few paragraphs and answer it - because this fall, on the first three Sundays of October, our annual stewardship campaign is called **Held in Trust**, and I'd rather all of us start from the same vocabulary.

The name comes from Paul, writing to a church that had gotten confused about who was in charge of what:

"Think of us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy."

1 Corinthians 4:1-2

The whole thing hangs on one word. Trust. Something entrusted to us, and the trustworthiness asked in return.

We don't own this church. We don't own its gospel or its resources. We hold them in trust. And the only thing anybody has ever asked of a trustee is that they be found faithful.

Three Sundays. Three words: **Servants. Stewards. Faithful.**

Now - about that vocabulary.

Stewardship.

We use this one two ways. Broadly, it names a spiritual practice - the conviction that everything we have come from God and has been handed to us to use well. We've said it in worship more times than I can count: there is nothing in your life that sits outside the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Nothing. That includes your economic life. It means we try to earn and spend in ways that actually look like the grace, peace, love, and justice we claim to be following.

Narrowly? When we say "the stewardship campaign," we mean the annual pledge.

Pledge.

A pledge is you telling us what you intend to give in the coming year. That's it. It is not a legally binding contract. Nobody is going to come find you if the year turns out differently than you planned - and years do that. Jobs end. People go on vacation, miss three Sundays, and never quite catch back up. That's life, and we know it.

What a pledge does is two things. It says out loud that you're committed to what God is doing here. And it lets our Session - our board of Elders - build a real budget instead of a hopeful one. They can't plan for ministry they can't see coming.

Tithe.

To tithe means, literally, to give ten percent. It shows up in Scripture as the way God asked the Hebrew people to fund the running of the Temple, and for a very long time - truly, well into the twentieth century - it was mandatory. In a lot of places you simply weren't a member unless you did it.

We see it differently now. I care far less about how much a person gives than about the fact that we give at all. Telling a young family that ten percent has to come to the church could be the difference between making rent and not making rent. We have no interest whatsoever in building a church budget on somebody's health or well-being.

Offering.

Plenty of traditions use this word for the spontaneous stuff - give what you can, when you can. And I do hope that when a blessing lands in our laps, a little of it finds its way back out. But an offering isn't something our Elders can plan around. That's the whole reason we talk about money once a year rather than every week. We'd rather focus on it for 3-4 weeks each Fall than spend every Sunday telling you we don't have enough and making you think that all Westminster cares about is cash.

So there's the vocabulary. Here's the part I most want you to hear.

The last thing I want is for anybody sitting in worship on a Sunday morning to do the math and decide they're less of a member - or less of a *disciple* - than the person in the next pew. That is not how any of this works. You are always already loved.

Nothing you put in the plate buys that, and nothing you hold back takes it away.

So the question giving asks isn't whether you've given enough. It's quieter than that, and it's asked inward: am I a participant in this work, or an audience for it? Give because you're grateful to a God who has never once wanted anything for you but goodness.

One practical note, and I mean it as information rather than a plea: our program budgets haven't gone up in five years, while utilities and materials have gone the direction everybody's have since 2020. The Elders aren't asking you to close a gap. They're asking to know what they're working with.

So this fall, please make a pledge. Commit to this place and to what God is up to in it.

And then let the rest of it go. Paul's very next breath, right after asking that stewards be found faithful, is that the Lord is the one who does the judging. Not us. And not you, about yourself.

Grace and Peace,
Landon Whitsitt
Senior Pastor



SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Greetings WPC members,

Fall is a season when the life of the church comes alive with fresh energy as we kick off a new year of Christian Education, reconnect with one another, and discover new ways to grow in faith together. On **September 13** the Fall semester's Sunday School classes begin for all ages at **9:30am**. After 10:30am worship we'll gather for our annual **Deacon Picnic**. Whether you've been away for the summer or are visiting for the first time, it's a wonderful opportunity to explore our Spiritual Formation opportunities, worship, and share a meal as we reconnect with old friends, and make a few new ones.

I believe that loving our neighbors begins with truly knowing them, because we cannot love our neighbors from a distance. In the life of the church, we discover that the people around us, their stories, experiences, gifts, and lives, bear the image of God and reveal the many ways God's grace is at work among us. As we are fully known and fully loved by God, we are called to extend that same grace and welcome to one another. Through Christ, we discover that belonging is not something we create on our own, but a gift God has already given us, a gift we continue to unwrap together as the body of Christ.

This is the work of the church: creating Christian community where people are not only welcomed, but truly known, where relationships are formed, faith is deepened, and everyone has a place to belong. Over the past year, we piloted **Waypoint**, a gathering for adults in their 20–30s centered around shared meals, Scripture, conversation, and opportunities to serve together. What we discovered was simple but powerful. People are looking for more than another church program. They're looking for genuine deeper connection with other Christians. Waypoint became a place where friendships formed, faith deepened, and people found a greater sense of belonging within our church family. Because of that experience, we're excited to grow our Circles of Belonging by introducing additional life-stage communities this fall.

- **Waypoint** (20–30-ish)
 - Discovering direction and identity
 - Exploring vocation, friendships, faith, and life's next steps.
- **Explorers** (30–45-ish)
 - Steering through life's important decisions
 - Navigating family, work-life balance, commitments, and faithful living.
- **Navigators** (45–60-ish)
 - Expanding purpose and discovering new paths
 - Reflecting on leadership, personal growth, and life's transitions.

PLEASE NOTE: These groups aren't about fitting neatly into an age category. Add an "ish" beside each age group in recognition that our sorting by ages and stages is not cemented, hard fast rule, but remains flexible. The goal is to find others navigating similar seasons of life so we can encourage one another along the journey.

Each gathering includes a shared meal, meaningful conversation, time with our pastors, and opportunities to connect more deeply with others at Westminster. We hope these groups become places where friendships flourish, faith is strengthened, and everyone finds a place to belong. *Look for the Circles of Belonging information table featured on September 13 in the Garden Court and our first gathering for the fall semester begins October 11. See page 5 for more details.*

Additionally, details about many other opportunities are included in the sections that follow, highlighting a wide variety of other Spiritual Formation favorites including Mid-Week Manna, weekly Bible study offerings, unique excursions, intergenerational events, and details about our classes meeting each Sunday.

Whether you've been part of Westminster for decades or are just beginning to find your place here, we hope you'll discover the joy of growing in faith together.

Sincerely,
Rev. Dr. Michelle Junkin
Pastor of Spiritual Formation





WEDNESDAYS, SEPTEMBER 16–OCTOBER 21

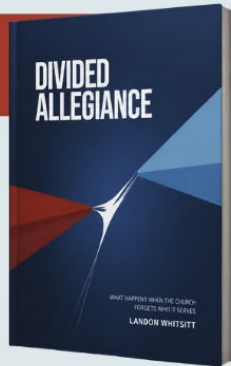
DINNER (OPTIONAL): 5:15 PM | \$10 ADULT | \$5 CHILD | \$30 FAMILY CAP

PROGRAM: 6:00–7:00 PM



ADULTS

DIVIDED ALLEGIANCE: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE CHURCH FORGETS WHO IT IS



Join us for a 6-week Mid-week Manna series exploring Rev. Landon Whitsitt's new book, *Divided Allegiance*, and how our faith shapes our identity in a world of competing loyalties.

Together, we'll reflect on what it means to follow Christ above all else, engage difficult conversations with humility and grace, and rediscover the Church's calling to be a community rooted in the Gospel rather than divided by culture or politics.

TOPICS INCLUDE:

- Our Primary Allegiance: Following Christ First
- When Faith and Politics Collide
- Rediscovering the Church's Witness
- Speaking Truth with Grace
- Living as Peacemakers in a Divided World
- Hope for the Church's Future

Each evening includes thoughtful teaching from Landon, discussion, and practical ways to live out our faith in today's world.



YOUTH | 4TH-12TH GRADERS

Join Amber and Scott in the youth room for devotion, fellowship, and games.



CHILDREN | AGES 5-3RD GRADE

ART & BIBLE CAMP

Join Michelle and Katrina upstairs after dinner for a special Art & the Bible Camp where children can be both creative and curious as they explore Bible stories through painting, drawing, sculpture, and other hands-on art experiences while learning about God's love and our place in God's story.



Whether your child already loves making art or is just beginning to explore their creativity, they'll be encouraged to see themselves as a unique and valued creator, reflecting the image of the ultimate Creator.



CHILDCARE | INFANTS-4 YEARS

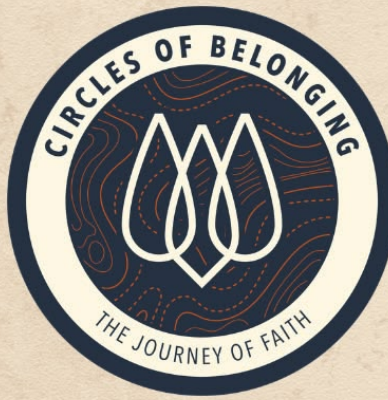
The nursery is available for infants through 4-year-olds.



RESERVE YOUR SEAT

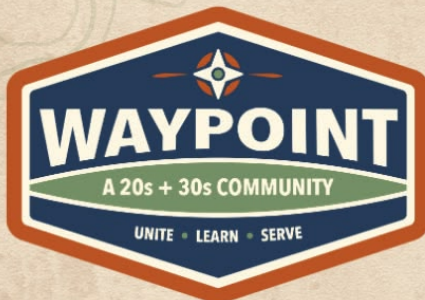
Register by scanning the QR code or via the website/app. Please register by Monday of each week for dinner.

FIND YOUR
PEOPLE



FIND YOUR
DIRECTION

Life changes. So do the questions we ask and the ways we grow in faith. Circles of Belonging brings people together around the season of life they're navigating, with shared meals, meaningful conversation, time with our pastors, and real relationships with others walking a similar road.



**DISCOVERING
DIRECTION + IDENTITY**

A 20s + 30s* community exploring vocation, friendships, faith, and life's next steps.



**STEERING THROUGH LIFE'S
IMPORTANT DECISIONS**

A 30s + 45s* community navigating family, work-life balance, commitments, and faithful living.



**EXPANDING PURPOSE +
DISCOVERING NEW PATHS**

A 45s + 60s* community reflecting on leadership, personal growth, and life's transitions.



***FIND YOUR CIRCLE**

You don't have to fit neatly into an age category. Find the group that best matches the season of life you're navigating and connect with people you can learn from, encourage, and walk alongside.

LEARN MORE

Circles of Belonging Info Table
September 13 | Garden Court

FIRST FALL GATHERING

October 11
Garden Court

WPC YOUTH



ARE YOU READY FOR SOME SUNDAY SCHOOL?! All WPC Youth (4th-12th grade) should come to the youth room for our "Welcome Back" breakfast on **September 13** and say hello to the Sunday School teachers during the Sunday School hour (9:30-10:15am). This will be followed by outdoor fun after the 10:30 service on the manor lawn for our annual Deacon's Picnic where we will eat lunch and enjoy fellowship! Let's have fun as we prepare for another season of learning about Christ's grace, peace, love and justice.

Sunday School for all Youth in grades 4-12 will continue to be held in the classrooms within the youth room with our favorite teachers! The kids can come down, hang out and grab a snack before migrating to the classrooms at 9:30am. We will continue with PCUSA's Follow Me curriculum this year which is based on practices Jesus did and taught us to do as faithful followers.

In hopes of making things a little more cohesive with different age groups, some changes are being made this year within the youth program and I will be doing away with Club 4/5. From now on, all 4th-7th graders will be part of our Mid High (MH) program and all 8th-12th graders will be part of our High School (HS) program. MH youth will attend Sunday School classes in the classroom on the right, and HS youth will attend Sunday School classes in the classroom on the left in the youth room.

Our HS Youth will continue to meet the first Wednesday of each month in the evening from 6-8pm in the youth room to eat dinner and enjoy fun, fellowship, and friends. Our MH youth will be invited to stay after church the first Sunday of each month for lunch and games/fellowship.

The WPC youth had the best time serving in McCurtain County again this summer! As this was my third trip to Broken Bow as youth director here at Westminster, we have made some excellent contacts in this part of the state allowing us to really provide some much-needed assistance. Our youth cleaned and mowed at First Presbyterian Church of Broken Bow, painted the fellowship hall and sanctuary at St. Matthew Presbyterian Church of Broken Bow, and even performed some demolition work at a new facility for local food and clothing bank, Gracefully Yours. Of course, we also made time for fun visiting a local candy shop, swimming in the lake, and playing games

at our magnificent cabin nestled in the woods. These beautiful woods were the backdrop for our fireside smore cookout on our final night where we said goodbye to our graduating seniors, Rowan Whitsitt, Peryn Crowder, and Olivia Dunham, who were enjoying their final mission trip with us.

The youth are once again wrapping up summer with pool parties thanks to our generous parents who are willing to open their homes to us! I always hate to see summer go as it is my favorite season but part of me does look forward to getting back into the routine that school and fall provide. Fall also means college football which does make me want to do a happy dance! All WPC Youth (MH & HS) are invited to kick off the year with a "Back to School" function at Chicken-n-Pickle on Sunday, September 20 from 2-4pm. We will play pickleball, eat some apps, and have lots of fun! If your child/young adult plans to join, please make sure you fill out a waiver.

Parents of WPC youth, please make sure I have updated email addresses and phone numbers for you. I will send out weekly emails with reminders about upcoming events for the youth and can also send text messages if you prefer. Please just make sure you communicate with me the best way to stay in touch with you!

Dates to Remember:

Sunday School Launch/Deacon Picnic: September 13
Midweek Manna (Wednesday evenings): Sept. 16-Oct. 21
MH & HS Fun at Chicken N Pickle: September 20
(waiver required)
World Communion Sunday: October 4
Elk Bugling with Dave Thompson: October 10
HS Lock-in: October 17
Reformation Sunday: October 25
Children's Sunday: November 15
All Church Christmas Brunch: December 6
MH & HS Youth Christmas Morning:
December 13
You Are Loved Sunday: December 20
Youth Sunday: May 2, 2027

Thank you,
Amber Ray
Director of Youth Ministry





There is a lot happening through Big Faith Resources, and we are grateful for the continued momentum behind this work. In recent months, we have had opportunities to develop new resources, strengthen partnerships, and learn from the communities we serve. Each of these experiences is helping us grow in our understanding of what it means to create truly welcoming and accessible spaces within the church.

Here are a few highlights from where we've been and where we're headed next:

Vacation Bible School

We continued the sensory-friendly components of our Vacation Bible School that were first introduced last year. VBS was a big success, with children benefiting from the sensory room and a variety of sensory-friendly items available throughout the week. These resources provided children with a comfortable space to regulate and recharge to more fully engage in VBS activities. The sensory room helped create a welcoming, inclusive, and accessible VBS experience for all participants.



Annual Advisory Team Retreat

In June, we gathered for our annual Advisory Team Retreat for Big Faith Resources. In August, we held a second gathering for team members who were unable to attend in June. Both gatherings included intentional rest, relationship-building, and meaningful work. We spent quality time together and had the opportunity to get to know our advisory team members even better. We reflected on the future of Big Faith Resources and shared ideas about where we are headed. We also conducted interviews with team members for our upcoming film project. These gatherings were a wonderful time of storytelling, planning, and strengthening the relationships that will help guide the future of Big Faith Resources.

Offering Wider Welcome

Big Faith Resources is honored to launch Offering Wider Welcome, a Welcome Works-funded collaboration with congregational cohorts focused on developing trauma-informed worship resources. Designed as a liturgical intervention of welcome, this initiative will provide participating congregations with a Worship Headphone Starter Kit, along with guidance and resources for creating worship spaces that are more accessible and hospitable to trauma survivors and others with sensory needs. This fall, we will begin sending the Worship Headphone Starter Kits to participating congregations. Offering Wider Welcome reflects Big Faith Resources' commitment to helping faith communities embody deeper practices of belonging, care, and welcome in worship.

Traveling Wonder Equipment

As we continue expanding sensory-friendly ministry opportunities, Big Faith Resources is developing Traveling Wonder Equipment Kits for shared use across the Synod of the Sun. We have begun ordering materials for larger kits that will be available at no cost to participating Presbyteries. Churches will be able to request temporary use of the equipment through their Presbytery office, expanding access to sensory supports for worship and ministry.

The kits are designed to give congregations an opportunity to explore and experience sensory-friendly practices before making long-term investments. They will also encourage collaboration and resource-sharing among Presbyteries. Each kit will include items such as portable sensory stations, flexible seating, visual supports, calm space materials, and adapted worship resources to encourage more inclusive, multi-sensory engagement in worship and faith formation. We look forward to sharing these resources with our congregations, with the first Traveling Wonder Kits scheduled to reach Presbyteries in September.

Wonder Box II

We are excited to be preparing the next edition of the Wonder Box: Wonder Box II. This free resource will be available to participating congregations and will be packed with sensory-friendly tools and resources that can be explored and implemented within their own churches. Our goal is to inspire congregations to discover new ways to create more welcoming, accessible spaces for worship and faith formation. We are currently designing the box and ordering supplies. The first shipment of Wonder Box II is expected to be sent to congregations later this fall.

Presbytery of New Covenant

In September, Big Faith Resources will be traveling to Houston as guest speakers for an Accessibility and Welcome event hosted by the Presbytery of New Covenant, part of the Synod of the Sun. We will share about neurodiversity and explore ways congregations can thoughtfully structure worship to better support and include people with sensory and other accessibility needs. We are honored to have the opportunity to share what we have learned and offer practical ideas for creating more welcoming and inclusive worship spaces.



PRESBYTERY OF
NEW COVENANT

Nurturing Children Through Worship and Prayer Annual Gathering

At the end of October, Big Faith Resources will gather with fellow organizations from the Nurturing Children Through Worship and Prayer Initiative for our annual conference through the Lilly Endowment. This gathering will be an opportunity to build relationships with others doing similar work, share ideas and experiences, and learn from one another. We look forward to bringing new insights and connections back to Big Faith Resources as we continue to strengthen and grow our work.



Strengthening
Ministry with Children
COORDINATION PROGRAM

Oklahoma Autism Conference

In November, Big Faith Resources will attend the 2026 Oklahoma Autism Conference at the OKANA Resort & Convention Center in Oklahoma City. We will have a table at the conference where we can share about our ministry, connect with attendees, and talk with people about our work creating more inclusive and welcoming spaces in faith communities. With this year's theme, "Strength in Every Story," we look forward to learning from others, building new relationships, and sharing the work of Big Faith Resources with the wider Oklahoma autism community.



We are excited about what is taking shape at Big Faith Resources and grateful for everyone who continues to be part of this journey. From new resources and partnerships to conversations with congregations across the Synod of the Sun, each step is helping us imagine new possibilities for welcome and belonging. We look forward to continuing this work together and seeing where the next season leads.

**Thank you,
Brianna Holt**

*Program Coordinator for Big Faith Resources
Director of Children's Music*

Visit the Big Faith Resources
website to learn more!
bigfaithresources.com



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Greetings friends and families,

We are excited to welcome everyone back as we begin a new school year and a new Sunday School year!

This summer was filled with wonderful opportunities to grow in faith, build friendships, and experience God's love together. From an incredible Vacation Bible School to our Summer Socials, Parents' Night Out events, Summer Sunday School, and other special activities, our children enjoyed a season full of learning, laughter, and lasting memories. Together, we explored the story of God's creation through engaging Bible lessons, creative crafts, hands-on activities, and energetic games that kept everyone moving and having fun.

As we begin this new season, we look forward to welcoming children and families each Sunday for meaningful Bible lessons, interactive activities, worship, and joyful fellowship. We are excited to see how God will continue to work in the lives of our children throughout the coming year.

Volunteers Needed

Children's Ministry is made possible because of faithful volunteers who invest their time and love into the lives of our children. We invite you to consider serving in Sunday School just one or two Sundays each semester. Whether you enjoy teaching, assisting in the classroom, greeting families, or helping with special events, there is a place for you!

If you're interested in serving or would like to learn more about the many volunteer opportunities available, we'd love to hear from you.

Together, let's make this a wonderful year of faith, fun, and growing in Christ!

Katrina McDonald

Children's and Spiritual Formation Coordinator
kmcDonald@wpcokc.org



Sunday School Registration

As we prepare for the new ministry year, we ask all families to complete a new Children's Ministry registration form, even if your child has attended in the past. This helps us keep our records current with the most up-to-date emergency contact and allergy information. The registration also includes a photo permission form, allowing us to celebrate and share the wonderful moments happening in our Children's Ministry throughout the year.



Children's
Ministry
Form





Parents' Night Out

PJs & Pancakes

November 6 | 6:00-9:00pm

Kids are invited to get cozy for a fun night of pajamas, breakfast-for-dinner, games, and a movie while parents enjoy an evening out. Come dressed in your favorite PJs and ready for a night of fun with friends!

Tinsel & Treasures

December 5 | 11:00am-3:00pm

Need a little time to get your Christmas shopping done? Drop off the kids for a fun-filled morning while you enjoy some kid-free shopping time! Children will get into the Christmas spirit with festive crafts and activities as they create special homemade gifts for the important people in their lives.

Children's Sunday

We are excited to announce that children will lead our worship on **Sunday November 15** at the **10:30am service**. Please save the date and sign up your child to be part of Children's Sunday. The Chapel Singers will be singing. Look for more details in future bulletins or talk with either Brianna Holt or Katrina McDonald.



Parenting Pop-up

Children's Ministry is excited to introduce Parenting Pop-Up, a series of short, practical conversations designed to help families navigate faith at home. Each pop-up will focus on a specific topic with helpful guidance, ideas, and resources you can take home and use with your family.

Save the dates for our upcoming Parenting Pop-Ups:

All About Communion

Sept 27 | 9:30am | Children's Ministry Area Music Room
Join Rev. Dr. Michelle Junkin for a short, interactive session explaining the biblical meaning, history, and symbolism of Communion within the reformed tradition to aid you in your decision of when your child is ready to join in the celebration of "taking communion".

All About Choosing A Great Children's Bible

Oct 11 | 9:30am | Children's Ministry Area Music Room

All About Experiencing Advent

Nov 22 | 9:30am | Children's Ministry Area Music Room



WORSHIP AND THE ARTS

One weekday in late March 2009, I received a call from my friend and mentor Paul Magyar. I was a freshman at Belmont University and had been singing with his church choir but had already decided to transfer to a different school. Paul was calling to inform me that I would be attending the funeral of one of his professors and mentors from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Dr. William J. Reynolds. He said it would be “a who’s who of church music”. Reynolds had been one of the preeminent hymnology scholars of his time and a significant force in the revival of Sacred Harp hymn-singing. I couldn’t tell you the name of anyone else who attended that April Fools’ funeral, but what I remember vividly is walking into a room across from the sanctuary at First Baptist Church in Nashville, taking a part-book, and joining a booming chorus lining out hymns in the style of 18th- and 19th-century gatherings, led by a rotation of singers who, I suspect, really were a “who’s who of church music”.

About five months later — it was a Tuesday or Thursday during the 4:00 p.m. hour — I was sitting near the front of a classroom at the Wanda L. Bass School of Music at Oklahoma City University in a section of English Diction taught by the head of the vocal coaching faculty, who also conducted half the opera and music theatre productions. I cannot recall why, but in one of the earliest sessions, the professor drew some comparison to singing in the Sacred Harp tradition. I couldn’t help but interject that I had been to a Sacred Harp hymn sing right before the funeral of a Sacred Harp scholar. He knew William Reynolds. As a boy growing up in First Baptist Church of Nocona, Texas, this professor had been asked to serve as the organist by their Minister of Music, David W. Music, who thought music education was so important that he would drive youth from the church an hour and a half each way to attend masterworks performances and lectures led by Dr. Reynolds at Southwestern. It would be a year before Emily and I got to know one another and two before we started dating, but she was sitting in the back of the room in that same section of English Diction. It took her about an hour to conclude that I was a brown-nosing teacher’s pet. Today my wife would tell you she was wrong. But the entire class did have to pay tuition and fees to sit through one of my earliest conversations with one of my closest friends.

In that English Diction course, the definitive Madeleine Marshall textbook was supplemented by positive examples from unlikely figures like George Jones and Trisha Yearwood. In Vocal Literature it was stories from history, sometimes scandalous, and occasional recordings from his wife’s doctoral recital with the kind of glowing commentary one

might hope for. But always, there were personal anecdotes from his time in Germany, his years at Stephen F. Austin State University, earlier days at OCU, and all kinds of conversations he’d had over the years, including, somehow, at a meal he once shared with a woman Judy Garland had lived with near the end of her life. “Storytime with Jan”, some students called it.

In rehearsal, Jan McDaniels was well-known for letting out an admonishing “boo” from the piano bench when a singer did something wrong, but nothing was more affirming than the “bravo” or “brava” that would come when he heard something excellent (Emma Mize and Paige Calvert made signs for themselves before finishing their graduate studies last year, “boo” on one side and “brava” on the other). Away from the university, he regularly worked with professional musicians and actors, some former students and some, like Kelli O’Hara and Kristin Chenoweth, who found fame before they found Jan. From freshmen to graduate students to struggling young artists to award-winning actors and singers, the way he treated those he worked with reminded them that, in a business that increasingly commoditizes art and artists, they could be — and already were — loving, caring people who happen to sing.

That encouragement was not always about music. Nor was it reserved for musicians. Pastors and doctors and teachers, children and university students and professionals and retirees, all heard these words affirming them for what they do and who they are. His compliments were plentiful but, even to people outside his area of expertise, never seemed cheap or self-serving.

This past July, I sat in on the first orchestra rehearsal for Lyric Theatre’s production of Sweeney Todd. It had not been the easiest two weeks for him and during breaks I could see he was more tired than usual, but when he was on the podium he was as brilliant as ever. What I took away wasn’t anything to do with gesture or phrasing or interpretation or anything else musical he had to offer. What I will remember is Jan stopping the rehearsal, putting down his baton, and using union orchestra time to tell them how fortunate he and the audiences were to have such an excellent orchestra in the pit and how much he appreciated them as musicians and as people. As I left, he said, “That’s how the sausage is made”.

We spent countless hours together in opera and musical theatre rehearsals, in vocal coachings, in church choir rehearsals, in gatherings in his home, in the car, at shared meals, and in hospital rooms. He suggested I attend OCU

Chapel services and worship planning team meetings with him, where I got to know Rod Newman and Melissa Plamann, who would become dear friends, mentors, and colleagues. He encouraged me to ask David Herendeen, OCU's Opera/Music Theatre program director, for audition feedback. It was not long before Dr. H was admonishing me in rehearsal with one breath but with the next reminding me that I was one of "Herendeen's boys". Even though I didn't have any coursework with Jan during my master's, he happily served on my graduate committee (and, true to form, offered the most direct critique of my thesis). Jan often told me that when he and Catherine moved to Oklahoma City, they committed to finding a church home rather than a church job. They landed at Central Presbyterian Church and, though it was not his intention, he was on staff shortly thereafter. What I encountered when I came there to join the choir was the home they had wanted to find and one they loved sharing with students. He invited me to his Sunday school class, where I learned about interlinear translations and came to understand expository teaching. He and Catherine trusted me to care for Alex and Ian, both at our church and at home, letting me get to know two remarkable young people. He brought me into a community without which I likely would not have finished my undergraduate degree in Oklahoma City and would not have the life I have here with Emily.

When I started at Westminster, he encouraged me as I stood in front of the choir while he sang in the bass section. He talked with excitement about working as the "associate director" to my "director" (which never felt quite right to me). Finally, last year he became my "co-director", a partner whose abilities I could never match but who I was so proud to stand next to and who made me feel like he was also proud to stand next to me.

And not that many years ago, he ended one of our lunches together by looking me in the eye and saying, "I don't know if I've ever told you this, but I love you."

As meaningful as that list of things he has done for me might be, it is only a reflection of what he is to me. For seventeen years, Jan McDaniel has been my teacher, mentor, friend, and brother.

"This is my friend, in whose sweet praise I all my days could gladly spend."

I think Jan would be mildly mortified to see these words from his favorite hymn ("My Song Is Love Unknown") used to refer to him. But then I might remind him that as Presbyterians

we call a funeral a "Service of Witness to the Resurrection" and at Westminster we begin each funeral by saying that "we believe the Risen Christ has lived a good life in each of us."

Jan, I have seen a lot of remembrances ending "RIP", but I am afraid I must — to borrow the words of your grandson — "disturb [your] eternal rest". My friend, you will keep finding yourself in classrooms and rehearsal spaces in elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, and universities; in professional concert halls and theatres around the world; in churches; in the families of those who have seen what you are like as a husband and a father.

When we refuse to accept subpar diction choices. When we pull out our "angry" voice because we know a startled moment today is much kinder than a job lost when it matters. When we never withhold the "boos" but also never stop looking for the "bravas".

When we move to a new place and choose finding a church home over finding a church job and when we help students looking for church jobs find community. When we leave out on the desk the sweet note our spouse put in our lunch bag. When we talk about a child with the same amazement and admiration with which you talked about your children and grandchildren.

When we tell stories about you. When we tell stories you told us. When we tell any story, new or old, with that earnest curiosity and passion you shared with us.

I know all of those things are unmistakably Jesus, but they will sure look a lot like Jan. That is nothing new. Jan is exactly what God's love has looked like to me so often over the past seventeen years.

Kevin Wilkinson
*Co-Director of Worship
and the Arts*



Co-Directors

CONGREGATIONAL CARE

Fellow Followers,

Life sends us pivots on a daily basis. We can make a plan but there are always interruptions. Sometimes there is a complete change of course. In those moments we need support. We need friends, family and community. Throughout Jesus' life, he modeled the pivot. Each time he did he chose to care, he chose to love others. He leaned into empathy and compassion. He wept, he grieved, he laughed, he rejoiced and he cared. Jesus showed us what Koinonia is. That deep Christian fellowship immersed in agape.

In September we are starting a **Grief Support Group** that will meet every other week. This group will meet Mondays from 12:30-2:00 in LL30. The dates through November are: 9/21, 10/5, 10/19, 11/2, 11/16, 11/30. This group will gather to share and support one another in grief. No registration required. All are welcome.

Communion is an important sacrament that we celebrate once a month during the 10:30am service and every Sunday during the 8:15am service. We celebrate Communion as a community of faith and as part of the Church throughout the world. The Communion table is not Westminster's table or exclusively a Presbyterian table, but a table where all are welcome.

If you or a family member would like to receive Communion but are unable to attend worship, our Deacons offer **In-Home Communion** upon request. Please contact the church office if you would like to schedule a visit.

Peace and Blessing,
Elder Kim Mitchell
Pastor of Congregational Care



WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Grief Support Group

EVERY OTHER MONDAY
SEPT 21-NOV 30 | 12:30-2:00PM | LL30



DEACON PICNIC

at Westminster!

September 13th
MANOR LAWN

FOLLOWING THE 10:30AM WORSHIP SERVICE



BBQ
LUNCH



ICE CREAM
TRUCK



FOAM
MACHINE



PETTING
ZOO



Everyone's Invited

SCAN THE QR CODE FOR
MORE INFO AND DETAILS!

MISSIONS

The Missions Team has been busy preparing for a wonderful season of **giving, serving, and reaching out to our community**. There are so many opportunities ahead for us to share God's love, and we hope you and your families will join us!



Trunk or Treat

October 28 | 5:30pm | Manor Lawn

Our first event this fall will be Trunk or Treat on October 28 on the Manor lawn. If you would like to participate by hosting a trunk filled with treats or helping serve food, please sign up online or at the Information Desk.

This will be a fun evening for our church family and a wonderful opportunity to welcome and connect with our neighbors.



Thanksgiving Meals

Thanksgiving will bring another wonderful opportunity for fellowship and service. We will be preparing 50 Thanksgiving meals for families we serve. For just \$60, you can sponsor a family of eight and help make Thanksgiving a little brighter for a family in need.

As the holiday season approaches, I am especially grateful for the opportunity we have to serve so many people in our community. Currently, we are providing:

- Groceries for 38 families
- Holiday meals for 51 families
- Christmas stockings for 96 children

Every contribution, every prayer, and every helping hand makes a difference.



You Are Loved

You Are Loved is an outreach event at the Homeless Alliance where we will serve a hot lunch and provide new hoodies, hats, gloves, snack bags, Hot Hands, pet food, and hygiene bags to 350 of our homeless friends.

We know this is a big undertaking, but it is also an incredible opportunity for families to serve together. What a beautiful way to remind our friends in need that they are seen, valued, and loved. Jesus said, "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you."

We will take 30 people per shift to the Homeless Alliance. On the same day, WPC will be preparing for Dinner with Love, where we will assemble more than 1,000 Christmas meals. There will be opportunities to bake cookies, prepare green beans, fill snack bags, and assemble meal boxes. Christmas music and snacks will make the day even more special! Both locations will provide wonderful opportunities for individuals and families to serve together.



Dinner with Love

December 23

Dinner with Love will take place at WPC on December 23. It will be a busy and joyful day of cooking, packing, and delivering meals to families in our community. Deliveries will be ready to go by 3:00pm. Please be on the lookout for sign-up sheets and online registration, which will be available closer to the event.





Meals on Wheels

Please remember that Meals on Wheels prepares and delivers meals every Tuesday and Thursday to our homebound friends and neighbors. These meals provide both nourishment and an important connection to our community.

If you would like to volunteer, please contact Jessica Gebhart at (952) 428-9271.



Burnt Offerings Cookbook

Our church cookbook, Burnt Offerings, is available for purchase online or at the Front Desk. It makes a wonderful gift, and all proceeds benefit Feed My Sheep.



Feed My Sheep

Food insecurity surrounds us every day. As we all know, the cost of groceries has skyrocketed, making it more important than ever to continue supporting Feed My Sheep so that we can continue this important mission.

The goal of Westminster Missions is not only to feed hungry mouths, but to spiritually feed the people we serve. Every meal, every conversation, and every act of kindness is an opportunity to show God's love.

Thank you for being a church that cares, serves, and loves our community so well. I am truly grateful for each of you and for the many ways you help make a difference.

Blessings, Rhonda Hefton

Director of Missions

#lovejesuslovepeople

#youwillneverregretbeingkind



ADULTS

SUNDAY MORNINGS - 9:30AM



Sunday Focus Class

Conference Room

Sunday Focus Group invites you to come engage in thoughtful book studies and conversation exploring the Christian path of spiritual growth and transformation. This fall, join an adventure in prayer. We will be studying three types of prayer from Richard J. Foster's book, "Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home." Each week we explore a new kind of prayer in a Prayer Lab experience and intentionally move beyond talking about it and engage in practicing it together. Come grow with us! For more information or if you have any questions, contact Gil Mitchell at (405) 820-5150 or Karen Styers at (405) 642-0749.



Adventurers Class

Room 103

The Adventurers Class offers a warm and welcoming space for all—whether you're drawn by the singing of beloved hymns, engaging biblical discussions, or thoughtful fellowship. Each Sunday morning brings meaningful conversation and opportunities for spiritual growth. During the months of September – November, we will be studying Hebrews and later Ephesians. During December, our focus shifts to – Advent. Whether you've been attending for years or are looking for a new place to connect, we'd love for you to join us this fall.



S.A.L.T. - Studying and Learning Together

Frederickson Hall

Join us for a pastor-led Bible study where we dive into the scripture passages that will shape our upcoming Sunday worship. Led by Landon—and occasionally Kim or Michelle—this class provides helpful context and background to enrich our understanding of the text. Together, we explore how these scriptures speak into our daily lives, forming us as individuals and as a community.

SPIRITUAL FORMATION OFFERINGS

UPCOMING EVENTS



Tuesday Men of Westminster

Tuesday Mornings | 7:30-9:00am | LL29

Weekly breakfast and Bible study led by rotating teachers. Open to all men of the church.



Scripture Sisters: A Wednesday Women's Bible Study

Wednesday Mornings | 10:00-11:30am | LL29

All women are invited to this small, informal group that offers a time for learning, sharing, and fellowship. The group's Bible study follows a six-session series by Rose Publishing. In September we will begin our study of Job. This informal discussion group meets in the conference room and attends lunch together nearby (optional) following the Bible study. Questions? Gayle Jones at (405) 720-8480.



Thursday Morning Men's Group

Thursday Mornings | 7:00am | Room 104

Weekly men's Bible study and fellowship. Open to all men of the church.



Knit and Pearls

Fourth Tuesday of the Month | Parlor

Knit and Pearls is not just a place to participate in needle art, it's a place to cultivate friendships while crafting for a purpose. This special ministry has knitted and distributed over 500 winter hats through missions at Westminster and the Health Care Alliance here in OKC. All are welcome to join.

Contact: Sarah Frank - sarah@4franks.com



Women's Circles

Looking for a way to grow in faith and fellowship? Westminster's Women's Circles are small groups that meet monthly for Bible study, connection, and spiritual growth. Whether you're new or a longtime member, this is a meaningful way to deepen your relationship with God, build lasting friendships, and contribute to a more just and peaceful world. All women of the church are invited to join! Some Circles meet at the church, others in members' homes—some during the day, others in the evening. Whatever your schedule or season of life, we'd love to help you find a Circle that fits. To get matched with a group, contact Katrina McDonald, and she'll connect you with the Circle moderators.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

UPCOMING EVENTS



CHILDREN

Children's Sunday

November 15 | 10:30am | Sanctuary

We are excited to announce that children will lead our worship on Sunday November 15 at the 10:30am service. Please save the date and sign up your child to be part of Children's Sunday. The Chapel Singers will be singing. Look for more details in future bulletins or talk with either Brianna Holt or Katrina McDonald.



Parents' Night Out

PJs & Pancakes

November 6 | 6:00-9:00pm

Kids are invited to get cozy for a fun night of pajamas, breakfast-for-dinner, games, and a movie while parents enjoy an evening out. Come dressed in your favorite PJs and ready for a night of fun with friends!

Tinsel & Treasures

December 5 | 11:00am-3:00pm

Need a little time to get your Christmas shopping done? Drop off the kids for a fun-filled morning while you enjoy some kid-free shopping time! Children will get into the Christmas spirit with festive crafts and activities as they create special homemade gifts for the important people in their lives.

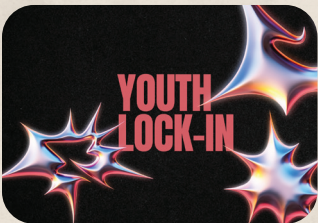


YOUTH

ALL Youth Back to School Party

September 20 | 2:00-4:00pm | Chick N Pickle

Kick off the new school year with WPC Youth at Chicken N Pickle! All youth are invited for an afternoon of games, food, and time together as we reconnect and start the year off right.



HS (8th-12th Grade) Lock-in

October 17 | 6:00pm-9:00am | Youth Room

Come join Scott, Maggie, and Amber for an overnight stay at the church! Stay for church the next morning or get picked up by 9am!

ADULTS

UPCOMING EVENTS



Pastries and Prayers

September 24 | 9:30am

Paris Bakery 2620 W Memorial Rd., Oklahoma City, OK 73134

Join Rev. Dr. Michelle Junkin for a special breakfast gathering featuring morning devotion, prayer, and spiritual reflection. Space is limited, so RSVP to reserve your seat at the table!



Sound of Music

September 27 | 1:30pm | Civic Center

Join WPC staff for an afternoon at the theater to see Rodger and Hammerstein's The Sound of Music. Space is limited. Sign up online or in the app and submit the \$30 payment to reserve your seat.



Parenting Pop-up

Children's Ministry is excited to introduce Parenting Pop-Up, a series of short, practical conversations designed to help families navigate faith at home. Each pop-up will focus on a specific topic with helpful guidance, ideas, and resources you can take home and use with your family. Save the dates for our upcoming Parenting Pop-Ups:

All About Communion

September 27 | 9:30am | Children's Ministry Area Music Room

Join Rev. Dr. Michelle Junkin for a short, interactive session explaining the biblical meaning, history, and symbolism of Communion within the reformed tradition to aid you in decision of when your child is ready to join in the celebration of "taking communion".

All About Choosing A Great Children's Bible

October 11 | 9:30am | Children's Ministry Area Music Room

All About Experiencing Advent

November 22 | 9:30am | Children's Ministry Area Music Room



Grief Support Group

Every other Monday, September 21-November 30 | 12:30-2:00pm | LL30

WPC's Grief Support Group will gather every other Monday to offer a supportive space for those experiencing grief. Come share, listen, and find support alongside others walking through loss. No registration is required, and all are welcome.

ADULTS

UPCOMING EVENTS



Blood Drive: Critical Need

October 4 | 9:00am–12:00pm | Room 105

We're excited to announce our upcoming Blood Drive with Our Blood Institute! Walk-ins are welcome, but scheduling in advance helps plan for a smooth and successful drive.



Circles of Belonging

October 11 | 6:00pm | Garden Court

Life changes. So do the questions we ask and the ways we grow in faith. Circles of Belonging brings people together around the season of life they're navigating, with shared meals, meaningful conversation, time with our pastors, and real relationships with others walking a similar road.



Ladies Night "Grateful Hearts & Creative Hands": An Evening of Crafts & Charcuterie

November 18 | 6:00pm

Join Rev. Junkin for a special women's event that includes a time of devotion reflecting on "The Art of Gratitude" and hands-on autumn-themed DIY projects including learning how to create succulent pumpkin planters (a perfect Thanksgiving centerpiece) and the option to make customized simmer pot kits to give to family and friends. Come join us for this special evening at the church as we fellowship, craft, and dine together. All supplies are provided including Charcuterie board style snacks. Childcare provided at the church with advance registration.



Guy's Night Out at Fassler Hall

November 11 | 6:00pm | 421 NW 10th St. OKC, OK 73103

Come connect with other guys in the church at Fassler Hall at this outing just for men to fellowship together. The church will cover appetizers. Beverages and meals are provided individually. Please register if you'd like to attend, as space is limited.

ALL AGES

UPCOMING EVENTS



Deacon Picnic

September 13 | 11:30am - 2:00pm | Manor Lawn

This event is a great gathering to bring your family and friends to celebrate the community that we have here at Westminster! BBQ Lunch, foam machine, petting zoo, and ice cream truck provided! Please let us know if you have any dietary restrictions when you register.



Mid-Week Manna

Wednesdays, Sept. 16-October 21 | Dinner: 5:15pm | Program: 6:00-7:00pm

Mid-week Manna returns this fall with Wednesday evening programming for the whole family. Join us for an optional dinner, followed by programs for adults, youth, and children. Dinner is: \$10 adults | \$5 children | \$30 family cap. Please register by Monday each week if you plan to join us for dinner.

- **Adults** will join Landon for a six-week series exploring his new book, *Divided Allegiance: What Happens When the Church Forgets Who It Is*, and what it means to follow Christ in a world of competing loyalties.
- **Youth** in 4th-12th grades will gather with Amber and Scott for devotion, fellowship, and games.
- **Children** ages 5 through third grade can join Michelle and Katrina for Art & the Bible Camp, exploring Bible stories through painting, drawing, sculpture, and other hands-on art experiences.
- **Nursery** care is available for infants through 4-year-olds.



Small Group Excursion: Elk Bugling Hike

October 10 | Departure: 3:30pm | Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge

Join Dave Thompson for exploring the Wichita mountains for an intergenerational/ family-friendly late afternoon hike! We hope to hear "bugling," the high-pitched elk mating calls from bull elk. This outing is fun for all ages, hikers and non-hikers alike! We'll meet at WPC and convoy to the trailhead parking at the Sunset picnic area. The hike will conclude before 7:00pm, and all are invited to eat dinner together at Riverside Café in nearby Medicine Park. Please register.



Trunk or Treat

October 28 | 5:30pm | Manor Lawn

Join us for Trunk or Treat at Westminster! Families are invited to enjoy a fun and welcoming evening with decorated trunks, plenty of candy, costumes, and fall fun for kids of all ages.


WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

CANDY

COSTUMES

FOOD

FAMILY FUN

TRUNK OR TREAT



A FUN FALL NIGHT FOR KIDS AND FAMILIES

OCTOBER 28 | 5:30PM
MANOR LAWN

Join us for Trunk or Treat at Westminster! Bring your family, wear your costume, and enjoy an evening filled with decorated trunks, lots of candy, delicious food, and fall fun!



COSTUMES

Come dressed
and ready
for fun!



CANDY

Visit trunks
and collect treats
along the way.



COMMUNITY

A safe, welcoming
event for our
neighbors.



FAMILY FUN

Games, food,
and fun for
everyone!

ALL ARE WELCOME



A LOOK BACK AT OUR SUMMER TOGETHER

This summer brought us together in worship, service, fellowship, and plenty of fun. Here are a few moments from life together at Westminster.



Youth Mission Trip
SERVING TOGETHER



Sunday Worship
GATHERED TOGETHER



New Members
WELCOMING NEW FACES



Community
LIFE TOGETHER



Family Movie Night
SUMMER FUN



Updated Pew Bibles
A LIGHT TO OUR PATH



Choir
MAKING A JOYFUL NOISE



Baptisms
MARKED BY GRACE



Joy
SUMMER SMILES

Westminster Presbyterian Church

4400 North Shartel Avenue
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73118
405.524.2224

Office Hours

M-F | 8:00am - 5:00pm

Sunday Worship Times

Chapel | 8:15am

Sanctuary | 10:30am

Sensory-Friendly | 10:30am
Frederickson Hall

*10:30am service Livestream available on
Facebook, YouTube, wpcokc.org, and
the WPC app*

Contact Pastoral Staff

Rev. Landon Whitsitt
Senior Pastor
lwhitsitt@wpcokc.org

Rev. Dr. Michelle Junkin
Pastor of Spiritual Formation
mjunkin@wpcokc.org

Elder Kim Mitchell
Pastor of Congregational Care
kmitchell@wpcokc.org

Elder Glenn Dunn
Parish Associate for Congregational Care
gdunn@wpcokc.org



WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

4400 North Shartel Avenue
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73118
405.524.2224

Congregational Giving

"The willingness to give is a sign of life. The fruit tree gives of its fruit, and we know it is alive. When it no longer gives, we know real life has gone out of it. The heart that hoards the blessings of God is no longer alive with spiritual power."

To give is to live."
The Worship Sourcebook

www.wpcokc.org/give



www.wpcokc.org



[wpcokc](https://www.facebook.com/wpcokc)



[@westminsterokc](https://www.instagram.com/westminsterokc)



[Westminster Presbyterian Church - OKC](https://www.youtube.com/WestminsterPresbyterianChurch-OKC)