



The Westminster Standard

Our Mission: TLC - Trust God, Love People, and Carry Christ into the World

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A Word From the Pastor

From time to time, Christmas Day falls on a Sunday. I remember keeping vigil on a davenport near the Christmas tree so I could talk with Santa in 1955. Around 3:00 am I conked out and missed Santa. Rats! On Christmas morning my folks said "It's time to get ready for church." I wasn't in the mood for church, but I lost that argument. Skipping church to play with toys was not an option in our house. Times have changed. In 2005, the New York Times ran a piece called "When Christmas Falls on Sunday, Megachurches Take the Day Off." This proves that Westminster is not a "Megachurch." On Sunday, December 25, 2011, we'll gather for worship and thank God that we have a Savior who came into the world to fight and win a battle we couldn't win. Christmas is the turning point. It's the day God weighed in personally. Eugene Peterson's *The Message* translation of John 1:14 captures this: "The Word became flesh and blood and moved into the neighborhood." Christmas Day is a day of victory and joy! I'm glad we're in this together. Thanks for all you do to make Westminster a loving, vibrant, faithful church.

Steve

Come celebrate Advent with us
Sunday, December 4 - 4:30 p.m.
 - Advent Workshop
Thursday, December 15 - 7:00 p.m.
 - *Magnificat* Performance
Saturday, December 24 - 6:00 p.m.
 - Christmas Eve Communion
Sunday, December 25 - 11:00 a.m.
 - Christmas Day Service

Worship



Magnificat Performance

Join us in the festively decorated sanctuary on **Thursday, December 15th, at 7:00 p.m.** for an evening of uplifting music performed by our choir along with a 15-piece orchestra and soloist Jennifer Hart. This is a great holiday event to which you can invite your friends and family.

Magnificat was composed in 1990 and named after the "Magnificat," or Song of Mary, which was a canticle frequently sung liturgically in Christian church services. Composer John Rutter was born in London in 1945, studied music at Clare College, Cambridge. His larger

choral works, including *Requiem* and *Magnificat*, have been performed throughout the world.

Advent Candle Lighters

We appreciate the following families as they light our Advent candles in the Sunday services:

- Nov. 27 - The Ruff Family Dec. 18 - Carrie Creel & Family
- Dec. 4 - The Haydel Family Dec. 24 - The Suttle Family
- Dec. 11 - The Brooks Family

Annual Christmas Joy Offering

The Christmas Joy Gift offering will be taken on **December 18th**. This offering has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition designed to assist retired church workers and their families whose retirement funds are meager. It also is earmarked to help Presbyterian Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges with scholarships and assist schools with operating costs. Please be in prayerful thought as to how you can play a role in these ministries.

November average attendance: 137

- Nov. 6 - 144 Nov. 13 - 143 Nov. 20 - 144 Nov. 27 - 120

Belonging

Advent Workshop December 4th

Our annual Advent Workshop starts at **4:30 p.m. on Sunday the 4th**. Come for a special day filled with crafts, decorating cookies, addressing Christmas cards and decorating the sanctuary for the Advent season. You can enjoy delicious soups and sandwiches as you rotate through the different stations. Our children's program will conclude the day's activities at 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary.

Men of the Church Breakfast

A special guest will be at Westminster on **Saturday, December 10th, at 8:00 a.m.** Mitch Williams, current Area Director of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and former sports journalist with WDAM, will be speaking at this month's meeting. All men are welcome to attend this event, and this would be a great one to invite a co-worker or friend to attend!

Family Ministry Team Meeting

Wednesday, December 14th, the Family Ministry Team will be meeting at 4:30 p.m. in Tommy's office.

Older Adult Task Force

Westminster has formed an Older Adult Task Force to explore a more intentional ministry directed towards our members over 60! Please mark your calendars for **Wednesday, January 4th, at 12 noon** for "A New Beginnings" luncheon to be held in the Fellowship Hall. All are invited, but we are targeting our 60 plus members to eat, visit, and have an informal discussion about Older Adult Ministry. More information to follow soon!

For those helping with this task force, we have a meeting on **Wednesday, December 7th, at noon** in the upstairs conference room.



Annual Christmas Party

All are invited to attend the annual Christmas party thrown by J.T. and Nancy Johnson. This year's event takes place on Saturday, December 17th, and guests are may drop in from 5-8:00 p.m. The Johnsons live at 1132 Lake Estates Drive, Hattiesburg.

Christmas Parties Everywhere!

The Young Adult Christmas party will be held on **Friday, December 9th, at 7:00 p.m.** at the Forsyth Home.

The Youth Christmas Party will be at the Tommy Suttle's home on **Sunday, December 11th, at 6:30 p.m.**

Christmas Caroling

We will venture out caroling at **5:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 18th**. Afterwards we will warm ourselves with chili, hotdogs, and hot chocolate in the fellowship hall. Meet at the church around 4:45 p.m. to get ready!

Wednesday Night Activities

We will take a break from our normal Wednesday night activities for the Advent Season and resume them on **January 11th**. The cooking team that night will be led by David Young. Those who attend the meal are asked to bring a salad or dessert.

December Birthdays

4 Bryan Hernandez	21 Bob Lochhead
9 David Arnold	25 Robert Cummings
12 Ray Steingraber	27 Ben Ruff
20 Bonnie Revicki	28 Tami Dossett

Inviting

Inviting Others

There are some great events coming up this month that are easy to invite friends, family, and coworkers to attend. The *Magnificat* performance will provide a wonderful night of uplifting music. Our Christmas Eve service could provide a memorable event for your extended family to enjoy as you celebrate Christmas together. We want others to know what a great place we have here at Westminster!

Growing Spiritually

Rotation Sunday School

Rotation Sunday School is an education model that teaches children Bible stories and concepts that are illustrated through art, drama, games, audio-visual, puppetry, computers, and cooking. The children rotate through different workshops each week.

Advent Rotation Memory Verse:

"And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth." John 1:14

Our current rotation runs through December 18th. The next rotation begins **January 8th** and runs through **February 5th**, and the topic covers Jacob and Esau. If you would like to help with the next rotation, please sign up on the board in the Fellowship Hall or contact Tommy at 601-584-1014.

Serving Christ In Mission

Christmas Gifts for Boswell



Karen Reidenbach & Steve Ramp help gather the gifts for Boswell.

This year our Boswell partnership was a breeze. We have a new quarterback: Karen Reidenbach (and her husband, Eric). For 30 years, Jimmy and Joy Garraway provided the leadership for this ministry. For health reasons, Jimmy and Joy have asked for help. This year we were able to get the gifts ready in about a month. Transporting the gifts to Boswell is always subject to rain delays. This year Orlando Rankin volunteered to pick up the gifts in

Boswell's van. Problem solved! We delivered 225 gifts to them on Monday, November 28th, and they were thrilled to carry a van-load back to Magee. Great work, Westminster!

Operation Christmas Child

The Presbyterian Women organized a drive to encourage our members to fill boxes with gifts for children worldwide, to share the love of God and bring joy to those who receive them. We are proud to report that Westminster doubled its number of boxes donated this year! There were a total of 46 boxes donated!



Bro. Rudy Jackson, Bob Buckner, Richard Potin, Orlando Rankin, Eric Reidenbach, and Steve Ramp pose for a shot while loading bags into the van.

Homeless Coalition Memorial Service

On **Wednesday, December 21st, at 5:15 p.m.**, the Pine Belt Coalition on Homelessness will be holding a Memorial Candlelight Vigil at the Civic Center Plaza at City Hall in Downtown Hattiesburg. This event is organized by Mayor Johnny L. DuPree and Kathy Garner, Executive Director of the AIDS Services Coalition. The National Homeless Persons' Memorial Day was organized in 1990 by the National Coalition for the Homeless and is held on the longest night of the year. It's purpose is to bring attention to the tragedy of homelessness and to remember our homeless friends who are no longer with us.

Oseola McCarty Youth Party

Through our member, Ruthie Davis, we have gotten to know Janet Baldwin, director of Oseola McCarty Youth Development Center in the New Jerusalem area of East Hattiesburg. Janet Baldwin's program is helping youth from K-12 to learn, grow, stay off the streets, and learn values and life-skills that are life-changing. Janet has asked Westminster if we will partner with her for a Christmas party December 19th. She is trying to get 250 Christmas presents to be given out that evening. The Rotary Club intends to help in this as well. We have a box in the narthex to remind us that there are many in our community who are living on the edge. If you feel led to help in this, please do. Christmas party on **December 19th, at 6:00 p.m.** Janet Baldwin, the Executive Director of the Center, invites everyone to attend. The Center is located at 607 McSwain Street in Hattiesburg.

Breadbasket

Every December, Westminster becomes a beehive of activity as volunteers from many churches gather to assemble Christmas food boxes and deliver them to 90+ families who are depending on us for food at Christmas. We've been doing this for nearly 30 years. It's one of our hands-on ministries. This year we will get organized on **December 18th at 2:00 p.m.**, when we will pack the boxes. On **December 21st, from 2-4:00 p.m.**, we'll meet at the church and deliver the boxes. If you've never done this before, show up and help! If you've done it before, we still need you to show up and help. Many hands make light work.

Administrative Leadership

Christmas Office Schedule

The church office will be closed on Monday, December 26th.

Pledges for 2012

Westminster is a generous congregation. In addition to funding a growing budget, we also give above and beyond to support ministries and meet needs that are not in the operating budget. When we pool our resources, we can accomplish many things that bring God glory and changes people's lives. We try not to talk a lot about money. One thing is clear: money follows mission. When people believe that the church is using God's money wisely, they step up. As we explore and pray about upgrading and expanding our facilities, we need to trust that God will provide the resources that are needed to carry out the mission. He always does. If you haven't turned in a pledge card for 2012, please do so. It will help us assess where we are and what steps to take next.



Westminster Academy of Music & Arts
Give the gift of music this Christmas!
Spring semester enrollment now open.
Classes offered:
Children's Choir & Musicianship Class (3rd-6th grade)
Private instruction in voice and instruments
Class instruction for adults
Dance classes
Free Computer Music Theory Instruction with enrollment
For more information:
www.westminsteracademy.blogspot.com
Dr. Connie Roberts - connie@wpchattiesburg.com

December Calendar of Events

1 - Thursday	12:00 pm - ShareCare Bank monthly potluck meeting
3 - Saturday	4:00 pm - Anastasia Talley - voice recital
4 - Sunday	11:00 am - Communion Sunday - 2nd Sunday of Advent 4:30 pm - Advent Workshop 6:30 pm - Children's Program
6 - Tuesday	9:30 am - PW Coordinating Team meeting 7:00 pm - Presbyterian Women - Circle 2
7 - Wednesday	12:00 pm - Older Adult Task Force Meeting
9 - Friday	7:00 pm - Young Adult Christmas Party - Forsyth Home
10 - Saturday	8:00 am - Men of the Church breakfast with guest speaker Mitch Williams
11 - Sunday	11:00 am - 3rd Sunday of Advent 12:15 pm - Diaconate Meeting 1:30 pm - Session Meeting 6:30 pm - Youth Christmas Party at Suttle Home
13 - Tuesday	9:30 am - Presbyterian Women - Circle 1 7:00 pm - Presbyterian Women - Circle 2 7:00 pm - <i>Magnificat</i> dress rehearsal
14 - Wednesday	12:00 pm - Family Ministry Team meeting 6:30 pm - Presbyterian Women - Circle 3 7:00 pm - <i>Magnificat</i> Performance
15 - Thursday	5:00 pm - "Lights & Bites" Johnson Christmas Party
17 - Saturday	11:00 am - 4th Sunday of Advent - Joy Offering
18 - Sunday	2:00 pm - Breadbasket pre-packing 5:00 pm - Caroling Party
20 - Tuesday	9:30 am - PW Prayer Group
21 - Wednesday	2:00 pm - Breadbasket deliveries
24 - Saturday	6:00 pm - Christmas Eve Communion
25 - Sunday	11:00 am - Christmas Day Service (no Sunday School)
26 - Monday	Church office Closed
Jan. 1 - Sunday	11:00 am - Service only (no Sunday School)