

J A N U A R Y 2 0 1 2



# 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

Standing on the threshold of a new year, I'm reminded of St. Paul's words to the church at Philippi: "Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it (salvation) my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus." Paul is reminding us that we are not prisoners of the past, and that we shouldn't drag our past into the future. Put it behind you. Let the past be past. Easier said than done! I like what a friend posted on Facebook: "Dear Past: Thank you for your lessons. Dear Future: I'm ready. Dear God: Thank you for another chance." That's a good way applying Paul's words. We don't allow the past to control us, but hopefully we remember the lessons. The writer of Lamentations looked back and remembered this: "But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. 'The Lord is my portion,' says my soul, 'therefore I will hope in him.' The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul that seeks him." Here's the good news: You and I are not prisoners of the past nor are we controlled by our circumstances. We belong to a God who is faithful, merciful, loving, and good. Let's carry that lesson into the new year thanking him for another chance and seeking His mercies daily.

Walking with you in faith, hope, and love . . .

## Worship

### Magnificat Performance

Westminster would like to recognize the members of the chancel choir and the directorship of Connie Roberts for their performance of Magnificat on December 15th. The performance was outstanding and people packed the pews to hear the composition by John Rutter. We appreciate the choir's dedication over the months of rehearsals. Westminster is fortunate to have so many talented members!



### Annual Christmas Joy Offering

The Christmas Joy Gift offering was taken on December 18th. A total of \$1,091.00 was given and this will be used to assist retired church workers and their families whose retirement funds are meager, as well as to help Presbyterian Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges with scholarships and assist schools with operating costs.

### **December average attendance: 131**

Dec. 4 - 138

Dec. 11 - 151

Dec. 18 - 158

Dec. 25 - 78

## Belonging

### ShareCare

ShareCare will hold their monthly potluck lunch at **noon on Thursday, January 5th.**

### Congratulations to Gene Fair

On December 14th, Governor Haley Barbour appointed Judge Gene Fair to the Mississippi Court of Appeals. He began his appointment on January 3, 2012 and will take the oath of office on **Friday, January 6, at 10:00 a.m.** Members of the church are invited to attend, and there will be a group leaving from Westminster that morning at 7:15 a.m. We are proud of Gene's distinguished service, pleased by his success, and certain that he will be an outstanding jurist on the Court of Appeals.

### Wednesday Night Activities

After a month off for Advent, Westminster is ready to kick off the Wednesday evening programs again! Starting at **5:45 p.m. on Wednesday, January 11th**, we will meet in the Fellowship Hall for dinner, fellowship, singing, prayer time, and scripture inspired discussion. The meal will be provided on the 11th. We will be having spaghetti. The congregation is invited to bring a salad or a dessert. The following Wednesday evening (January 18th) will be potluck. Please plan to start off the Wednesdays in 2012 with your Westminster family!

### PW Women Circle 3

The January meeting for Circle 3 will be **Wednesday, January 11th at 6:30 p.m.** The February meeting will be on Wednesday, **February 1st**, so go ahead and mark your calendar!

## Men of the Church Breakfast

January's breakfast will be **Saturday, January 14th, at 8:00 a.m.**

## WAMA Announces Spring Enrollment

The Westminster Academy of Music and Arts will begin spring classes in January. Private Lessons in Voice and Instruments for all ages will be offered. There will also be class instruction for adults. Free computer Music Theory Instruction is offered with enrollment. Some new additions this spring include a Children's Choir for grades 3-6 and Dance Classes. All classes taught by experienced professional musicians or dance instructors. For more information email Dr. Connie Roberts at [connie@wpchattiesburg.com](mailto:connie@wpchattiesburg.com).

## New Beginnings

Westminster has formed an Older Adult task force called New Beginnings. This group has been challenged to create an intentional ministry for our members 60 years of age and older. The 60 plus demographic at Westminster numbers over 100 people! It is a group of dedicated men and women who have "been there and done that" in the life of the church. They have selflessly served, volunteered, and worked their fingers to the bone over the years in Christ's service, and now we want to serve them! On January 4th, there was a luncheon held in the Fellowship Hall for all interested in this new ministry. Margaret Suttle, our resident Older Adult guru, led a discussion centering around what Older Adult Ministry is and what it can do in the life of a church such as Westminster. The Older Adult Task Force has taken the information gathered at the luncheon and will be working to establish programs in the life of Westminster focused on our older members. We are excited about this new ministry opportunity, and we want your feedback. We will keep you all posted through the newsletter, bulletin, and email as this ministry comes to life. Ideas are welcomed! If you have comments or suggestions, please contact Tommy Suttle or Sharon Potin.

## Souper Bowl Sunday

Save the date for Westminster's annual Souper Bowl Sunday. This year's event will be held after the service on **Sunday, February 5th**. We'll provide the soup and desserts--just bring a salad to share!

## January Birthdays

2 Geraldine Jones	10 Rachel Owens	19 Sarah Hogrefe Mabary
2 Margaret Lochhead	13 Mary Hannah Ruff	24 Dean Cromartie
2 Sam Ruff	14 Gary West	25 Nancy Johnson
4 Anthony Cafalone	15 Andrew Gaudet	29 Richard Potin
5 Michael Brooks	15 Wesley Owens	30 Cam Brooks
7 Mae Westbrook	15 Lavon Smith	30 Betty Garraway
9 Ann Aldridge	17 Pat Davis	30 Margaret Pearson
10 Brenda Owens	19 Sheila Gaudet	31 Gene Owens

## Serving Christ In Mission

### Breadbasket

Every December, Westminster serves as the assembly site for the Breadbasket ministry packing location. On December 18th, volunteers packed 100 boxes for 100 families in our area. These were delivered by Breadbasket volunteers on Dec. 21st. Under Kay Salter's brilliant leadership, everything flowed smoothly and people received tangible signs of God's love and care.

We will take Breadbasket applications the week of **January 9-13**. Volunteers can sign up on the sheet in the narthex. Easy step-by-step instructions are available for first-timers.

### Upcoming Blankets + Offering

The Blankets+ Offering will be received **January 8**. Your gift of just \$5.00 purchases a blanket through the Church World Service blanket program which supports a variety of self-help textile-oriented development projects and provides blankets for use in disaster situations.

### Casseroles Needed

Calling all cooks! The freezer in the Jones House is stocked with casseroles and soups that can be taken to sick or homebound members, but we're running low and need to resupply. Disposable containers are available in the fellowship hall.

### Youth Looking for Garage Sale Items

The Youth will have a garage sale in the spring to raise money for their mission trip to Jamaica and for The Great Escape. All items will be accepted EXCEPT CLOTHING (shoes will be accepted). The youth will begin collecting items immediately. Contact Amy Ruff at 601-310-2769 if you have questions.

## Inviting

### New Members



The Westminster Family is growing! In December, we received on reaffirmation of faith: Reagan Nelson, a senior Nursing Student at USM, Mrs. Kinlock Bell, a retired Presbyterian, and Carrie Creel, mother of three great boys: Jackson, Oliver, and Brodie.

If you know someone who is looking for a church home, recommend Westminster and encourage them to talk with Steve, Tommy, Amy, or one of our Elders.

## Growing Spiritually

### Rotation Sunday School

2012 brings a fresh set of rotations for our children's Sunday school program. The first rotation of the year will be focused on Jacob and Esau. The rotation begins **January 8th** and runs through **February 5th**. We need teachers, so please look in the Fellowship Hall for your opportunity to sign up and teach a two week rotation. Something new to our Rotation Sunday school program in January is a cooking rotation! The kids will be making stew for Esau! Please see Tommy Suttle, Ginny Graham, Cindy Nobles, Mary Clare Royals, or Amy Ruff if you are interested!

## Administrative Leadership

### Stewardship

2011 was a record year for Westminster. We were expecting revenues of \$420,000, and it looks like we exceeded that! Our expenses were lower than anticipated. The books are not closed, but early indications are promising. This gives us a good start on 2012. For 2012, we're hoping to generate \$441,000 from various sources including \$300,000 in pledges and \$10,000 pledged towards the Long Range Plan. We are pleased to report that the Long Range Plan pledges are at \$40,620; pledges for the operating budget are at \$268,000, which is 11% shy of our goal. If you have not turned in a pledge card for 2012, we will gladly receive yours.

## Ministry in Focus - Presbyterian Women

In an article found in the July/August edition of *Horizons*, a magazine published for Presbyterian Women, author Sharon Gillies asks questions to six generations of women. One question was focused on the topic of women-only gatherings and their value to a church. Despite the differences in age among the interviewees, common answers were given for the importance of such groups. Viola, from the Greatest Generation, values Bible study and learning from other women. From the Silent Generation, Lydia commented on her enjoyment of studying, serving, and having fun with other women and the joy of seeing each member's gifts shine. Eveline, a Baby Boomer, noted that she enjoys fellowship and encouragement from other women. Alexandra, from Generation X, finds that some struggles are uniquely female, and she feels free to share those with her group. Sharde, of Generation Y, likes the opportunity to share her views and be heard, as well as the chance the group offers to strengthen each other. Little Zoe of Generation Z likes being with her friends!

As the mission statement of Presbyterian Women states, they nurture their faith through prayer and Bible study, support the mission of the church worldwide, and build an inclusive caring community of women. As a Presbyterian Woman, you are invited to be a part of such a group at Westminster. Three Circle groups meet each month at various times. If you are not a part of a group, please contact Peggy Langnecker at 601-582-3563.

## January Calendar of Events

1 - Sunday	11:00 am - Sunday Service (no Sunday School)
3 - Tuesday	9:30 am - PW Coordinating Team meeting
4 - Wednesday	12:00 pm - New Beginnings Luncheon No Wednesday Activities
5 - Thursday	12:00 pm - ShareCare Potluck Lunch
8 - Sunday	11:00 am - Communion Sunday and Blankets+ Offering 12:15 pm - Diaconate Meeting 1:30 pm - Session Meeting Breadbasket Applications Taken
9 - 13	
10 - Tuesday	9:30 am - Presbyterian Women - Circle 1 7:00 pm - Presbyterian Women - Circle 2
11 - Wednesday	5:15 pm - Children's choir 5:45 pm - Dinner - Cooking Team has main dish 6:30 pm - Bible Study 6:30 pm - Presbyterian Women - Circle 3
14 - Saturday	8:00 am - Men of the Church Breakfast
17 - Tuesday	9:30 am - PW Prayer Group
18 - Wednesday	5:15 pm - Children's choir 5:45 pm - Potluck dinner 6:30 pm - Bible Study
25 - Wednesday	5:15 pm - Children's choir 5:45 pm - Dinner - Cooking Team has main dish 6:30 pm - Bible Study
29 - Sunday	7:30 pm - Voice Recital - Melanie Gardner