

February 2, 2025



Westminster

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



Worship by Joel Schoon-Tanis

Worship With Us On Sunday!

4th Sunday After Epiphany

Scripture
Luke 4:16-30

Sermon
When The Truth Hurts
The Rev. Julie Emery

Bulletin

**10:00 a.m. Sunday Hybrid Worship
Link**

Zoom Meeting ID: 822 3301 6989

Any questions, contact Becky Kimberly in the office
at office@westpresby.org.



In this e-newsletter, you'll find details about:

Stewardship Thank You/Update
A Sanctuary Surrounded by Abundance
The Rev. Dr. William Yoo Guest Preacher at FPCH on March 2
Help Victims of California Wildfires
Thank You for South Park Inn Donations
Book Study and Discussion on Gifts and Abundance
Community Prayer Time Mondays at Noon
Link to PSNE "Connecting Our Conversations" Podcast
Prayers for Our Community and Our World



Westminster
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

“The one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for **God loves a cheerful giver**. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work.” - 2 Corinthians 9:6-8

Thank You for Your Commitment of Time, Talent and Treasure!

Dear Westminster Family,

Thank you to everyone who participated in our Commitment Sunday service and submitted their 2025 stewardship commitments of time, talent, and treasure! Your generosity and faithfulness are a true blessing to our church community, helping us sow seeds of faith, hope, and love as we move forward in ministry together.

If you have not yet had the opportunity to submit your commitment card, there is still time to do so! Your pledge—whether made on paper, digitally, or by email—plays a vital role in supporting Westminster’s mission and ministries in the year ahead. Every commitment, no matter the size, helps us continue to build relationships, deepen faith, and serve our community with God’s love.

If you need a commitment card or have any questions, please visit www.westpresby.org or reach out to the church office. You can also access the digital commitment card using the button below.

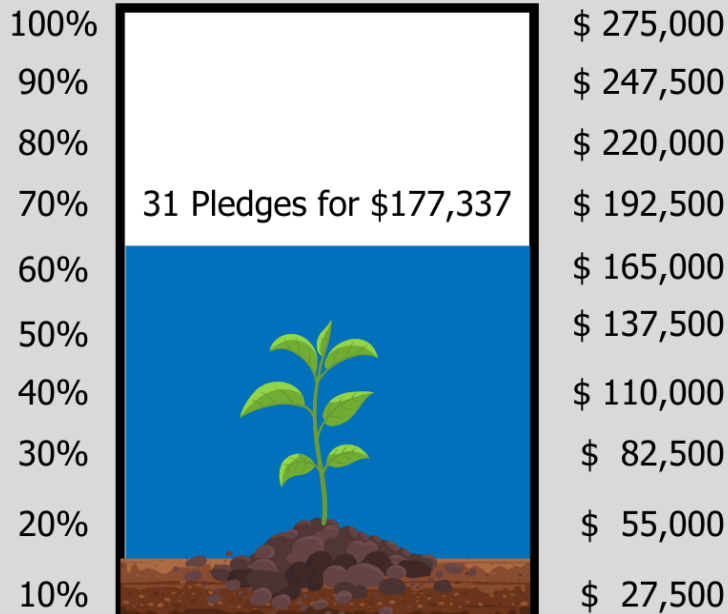
Thank you for being part of this journey. Together, with God’s guidance, we will continue to grow and thrive in 2025!

With gratitude and hope,

Greg Hammond
Finance Team Leader/Stewardship Chair

Electronic Pledge Card

Westminster 2025 Stewardship Campaign



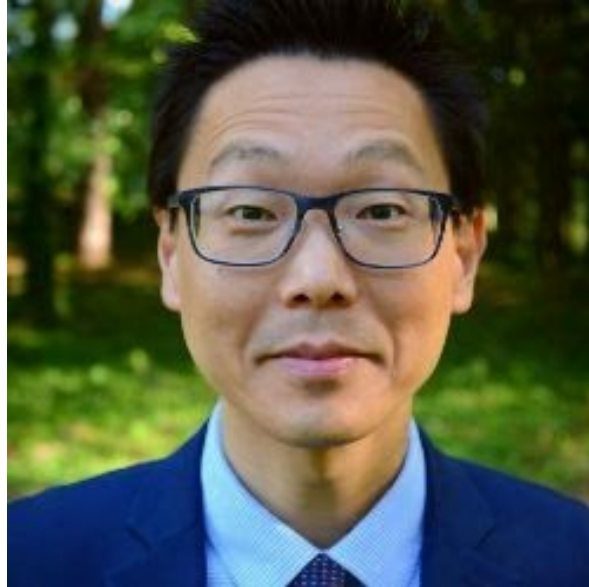
A Sanctuary Surrounded By Abundance

During our stewardship season at Westminster we are all challenged to recognize and shift our mindset toward abundance. If we can find a way to step back and consider all that is around us, we can find gifts everywhere. God's love is abundantly shown in the people, the places, the connections and the small miracles that are hidden in our everyday

lives. Truly, we are surrounded by abundance.

It is helpful to have visual reminders of things we often fail to recognize. So during this stewardship season, we are symbolizing abundance through garlands of plushly gathered ribbon and beautiful rich fabric. Each week these garlands will appear in more places in our sanctuary. As you come into our worship space weekly and find more garlands, please use this as a reminder that truly, we are surrounded by abundance.

Breathe. Smile, Know that God promises to abundantly give us all that we need.



**Westminster to Worship at
First Presbyterian Church of Hartford
Sunday, March 2 at 10:30 a.m.
Renowned Scholar and Public Theologian
The Rev. Dr. William Yoo to Preach**

The Rev. Dr. William Yoo, Associate Professor of American Religious and Cultural History at Columbia Theological Seminary, is one of the leading scholars today in the study of North American Christianity and race-relations, with a particular specialty in the history of slavery in the United States. He has authored several influential works, including *What Kind of Christianity: A History of Slavery and Anti-Black Racism in the Presbyterian Church* and *Reckoning with History: Settler Colonialism, Slavery, and the Making of American Christianity*.

Dr. Yoo has been invited to preach at First Presbyterian Church of Hartford (FPCH) on Sunday, March 2nd and everyone is encouraged to attend. Westminster will be joining FPCH for worship that Sunday at 10:30 a.m. (please note the later start time). For those who worship with us online, a link will be provided.

Dr. Yoo will be in the Hartford-area to lead the Presbytery of Southern New England (PSNE) in a one-day training featuring his research on

North American Christianity. Dr Yoo will specifically address the history of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), how that history shows up in our location in New England, and the reverberating impact that history has had throughout our country. In so doing, his address will guide PSNE clergy and leaders in facing, and reckoning with, our denomination's role in shaping the deep legacy of racist practices, ideologies, and segregation in the U.S.A. To learn more about Dr. Yoo and his work, [click here](#) to hear his appearance on the podcast *This is Crucial*. To hear his keynote talk at the Matthew 25 Summit [click here](#).

This is an incredible opportunity to hear Dr. Yoo preach so we hope you will join us at First Presbyterian Church of Hartford on Sunday, March 2 at 10:30 a.m. Please contact Becky Kimberly in the church office at 860-521-6240 or office@westpresby.org with any questions.



GIVE NOW
Support the PC(USA)'s response
to the California wildfires



**PRESBYTERIAN
DISASTER
ASSISTANCE**



**Help the Victims of California Wildfires
Stand in the GAP (Give...Act...Pray)
Through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance**

The devastating fires affecting our neighbors in California have deeply impacted us all. As people of God, we are called to stand with our siblings in the "GAP" to *Give. Act. and Pray.*

Join Westminster as we **Act** by collecting critical items needed to assemble hygiene kits. These hygiene kits answer the call of the

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA), the emergency and refugee program of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). PDA is on the ground in California, providing critical care—and we can help.

Items needed (note specific item requirements)

- 1-gallon resealable plastic bag
- One washcloth
- Toothbrush (in original packaging)
- Fingernail or toenail clipper (packaging removed)
- Bath-size bar of soap (in original packaging)
- Travel-size stick deodorant (3.4 oz. or less, non-aerosol)
- Travel-size lotion (3.4 oz. or less, fragrance-free, NEW only)
- Travel-size shampoo (3.4 oz. or less, NEW only)
- Travel-size toothpaste (3.4 oz. or less, expiration date of at least 1 year)
- Sturdy wide-tooth comb (remove from package; 6" minimum teeth; pocket combs or picks not accepted; rattail combs and combs without handles are acceptable. [Example](#))

Prefer to support the hygiene kit efforts through a monetary donation? Checks can be made out to "Westminster Presbyterian Church" with a note in the memo line for "CA wildfire kits". Donations can be left in the offering plate or in the locked mailbox at the entrance to the church.

Looking for a different way to *Give*? Financial support for relief efforts can be given through PDA. Gifts can be made online by clicking [HERE](#), by phone at 800-728-7228, ext. 5885, or by check made payable to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with "PDA-CF25-E" written on the memo line and mailed to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), P.O. Box 643700, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700.

As we come together to support the people of California, may we continue to hold all those affected by the fires in *Prayer*. May our prayers bring them strength, healing, and hope as they face the challenges ahead.

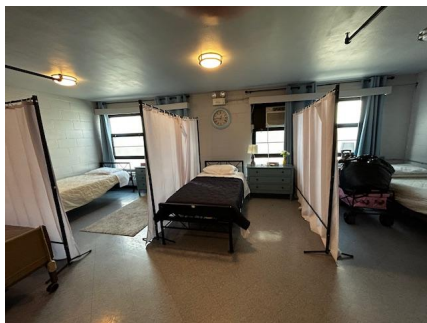
Hygiene kit items can be placed in the bin outside the church office. More information to come regarding kit assembly. Contact Abbey Downing with questions or concerns (downingac@gmail.com 860-601-6178).



Thank You for South Park Inn Donations!

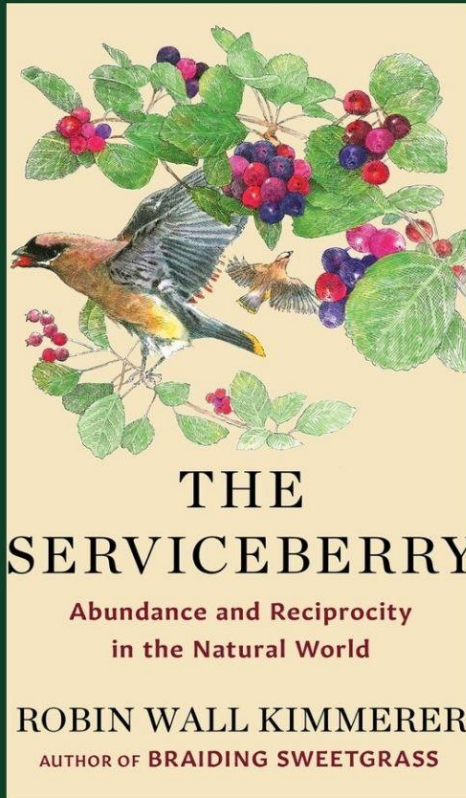
Bill Starkowski, Deacon, had an opportunity to deliver Westminster Magi Gifts collected during Christmastime to Jureek Ellerbe, Development and Volunteer Manager at South Park Inn with much thanks and gratitude (*see photo above*). Westminster donated in excess of 19 bags for sheets, towels, socks, underwear, detergent and toiletries.

South Park Inn (SPI) in Hartford provides 105 beds for the unhoused. Of those 105 beds, 17 are respite beds for people newly released from the hospital who would otherwise be discharged to the streets, 15 are transitional beds for veterans to provide safety, clothing, food and case/peer management and 73 beds devoted to the unhoused to provide a safe environment, food and clothing (*see photos below*).



One way Westminster supports SPI is by providing a home cooked meal every fourth Tuesday of the month. If you are interested in joining the team of volunteers who cook for SPI or if you're interested in serving a meal, please contact Bill Starkowski at starman5889@comcast.net. For more about what SPI does, SPI Principles and Programs, check out their website southparkinn.org.

Surrounded by Abundance



**Join us for
a book
study and
discussion**

**Books available!
Discussion dates
to be announced!**

More details below

Join us for a Book Study and Discussion New Meeting Dates to Be Announced

Please join the Flourish team for an “abundance mindset” book study and discussion opportunity around *The Serviceberry, An Economy of Gifts and Abundance* by Robin Wall Kimmerer. This lovely, short book invites us to reflect on our culture and to think differently. It provides us with a way to think about how we live within a culture that elevates competition and profit over relationship and mutual benefit. The aspirational nature of the author’s hopeful message, all within a short, very readable 105 pages, can be an opportunity for us to learn about a different path and build relationships among ourselves, supporting each other in finding that path in our own lives.

Due to some conflicts with other church activities, we are rescheduling the original meeting dates. If you have a preference for a meeting day or time (Sundays after worship and/or a preferred time during the week) please contact Peter Benner at 860-922-4114 or pbenner16@gmail.com or Larry Carr at 339-222-8601 or larrycarr@gmail.com. Please note the discussions will be hybrid, offered both in-person and on Zoom.

The John Webster Library has provided books for us to borrow at no cost. Copies are on the front desk in the office. If you take a book, please make sure to include your name on the sign-up sheet next to the books.

Whether or not you have read the book, we hope you will join us for great discussion and a time to support and uplift each other.



Community Prayer Time, Mondays, 12:00 p.m.

ALL are welcome to join the Reverend Julie Emery and members of the Care Ministry Team each week for a time of collective prayer. Join us in-person or online to lift the prayers of our community on Mondays from 12:00 - 12:30 p.m. We will meet in-person at church in the Smart Room or you can click the button below to join us online.

[**Zoom Link to Community Prayer Time**](#)

Connecting Our Conversations

MATTHEW 25 SERIES

WHY MATTHEW 25 AND WHAT IS INTERSECTIONALITY?



PSNE



DR. COREY SCHLOSSER-
HALL

REV. DR. SHANNAN
VANCE-OCAMPO



What it Means to be a Matthew 25 Church PSNE Podcast, "Connecting Our Conversations"

As a Matthew 25 congregation, Westminster is committed to justice, community, and serving "the least of these." This calling shines through our work with organizations like GHIAA, South Park Inn Homeless Shelter (SPI), and Covenant to Care for Children (CCC). Last November, we joined over 1,000 people of faith at GHIAA's Power Summit to address critical issues such as affordable housing and combating hate. Each month, Westminster provides meals for 75 unhomed neighbors at SPIT and annually supports CCC with school supplies, Thanksgiving meals, and Christmas gifts.

In 2025, Westminster is discerning how to align our ministry and resources to deepen our role as a Matthew 25 church. We invite you to listen to "Why Matthew 25 and What is Intersectionality," the first episode of a 7 episode podcast series *Connecting Our Conversations* from the Presbytery of Southern New England (PSNE) exploring faith, justice, and transformation. Let's envision a bold, compassionate future together.

Episode 4, "Pillar #3: Eradicating Systemic Poverty" has just been released. Click the button below to access the podcast.

[Click Here to Hear the
Podcast](#)

Prayers for our Community and Our World

Our scriptures invite us, again and again, to devote ourselves to prayer. As Paul says in his letter to the Philippians: "Do not worry about anything but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."

We invite you to use the following prayers in times of personal devotion, joining with our church to lift up those in need in our community. All are invited to join in a time of communal prayer and silence with the Care Team on Mondays at noon.

We pray for those experiencing increased fear and oppression in this time:

We lift to God members of the LBGTOIA+ community, their families and loved ones, that they might experience love and support, welcome and affirmation. May we find ways to stand up for justice and protect those in need.

We lift to God members of the immigrant and refugee community. For those desperately seeking asylum and safety, may God surround and protect them. For those who fear oppression and hatred, may they be surrounded by God's love and grace.

We pray that within the leadership of our community and country, better angels prevail in stopping injustices and seeking mercy, peace and security for all God's beloved children.

We pray for those in need of health and wholeness:

Richard Stafford, who is undergoing chemotherapy treatments; Janet Stafford, who is recovering from bronchitis; for ongoing healing for Jestina McGill and Barbara Aronson; Howard Sprout, who is in hospice care; Janet Wade-Utay's brother George Wade, who is battling cancer; Karen Wagner's friends Sherm, Deana and Rich; Becky Kimberly's cousin Pete; Ross and Ginger Ludeman; Jon Scoville; Muriel Sherman; Rachel Lloyd's Aunt Katie now in hospice care; Stella Madjitey; Betty Stokes; Nancy Dewey; and all those suffering from chronic illness, and the families who care for them.

We ask God to comfort those who grieve:

Eliza Cleveland, Susie Scoville and their family. Karen Wagner and the family of her nephew; Barbara Riihimaki and family; David Hall and family; Jim and Vivian Carlson; Elsie Harp and family; David MacMeekin and family; Russ Smiley and family; Laura Berman and family.

We pray for those suffering in the aftermath of recent disasters:

We continue to pray for victims of wildfires especially in Los Angeles and, those displaced from their homes by Hurricanes Helene and Milton. May they find support and restoration, comfort and connection.

We pray for those living in the midst of war and violence:

This week, we pray especially for peace in the Middle East, that the ceasefire will persist. We give thanks for the return of hostages and the return of displaced Palestinians to their homes. We pray for continued peace, mercy and unity throughout the region. We pray for peace and protection for the people of Ukraine and the children of the world.

We pray for those near and far:

We pray for the family and community of those who died in the recent plane and helicopter crash in D.C. May God surround those who mourn and bring them comfort and peace.

We pray for our country and its leaders,
that we might find mercy, understanding and unity.

We pray for all those experiencing racism, sexism and homophobia,
that they might find love and justice.

We pray for those experiencing homelessness and food insecurity,
especially as the weather turns colder, that they might find help.

We pray for those experiencing mental illness or struggling with
addiction, that they may find strength and hope.

We pray for the members and leaders of our church, that we might
discern God's will and move into our future with faith and courage.

We celebrate with:

Karen and Howard Sprout on the birth of their grandson, Evan Howard Engel, son of Miriam and Joanna (Sprout) Engel and brother of Laura, born January 24, 2025. (*see photo below*).



Session Members

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