



WESTMINSTER

presbyterian church | epc

APRIL 2024

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LIFEHOUSE YOUTH UPDATE: Thank you to everyone who participated in the first-ever LifeHouse Youth Yard Sale. We are grateful for every donation, shopper and volunteer. The sale was open 7 a.m. until 2 p.m. on March 23, and we raised more than \$1,700 for LifeHouse Youth. The funds will be split between subsidizing camps and other activities for Westminster's youth and seeding youth-led mission projects.



During our April 14 and 28 meetings, we will be preparing for Youth Sunday on May 19.



EASTER AND HOLY WEEK

What a joy-filled celebration of Palm Sunday, Holy Week, and Easter! On Palm Sunday, Westminster's Sunday School children led a palm-waving processional into worship. From the front of the sanctuary, they sang the first verse of "All Glory, Laud, and Honor" with the congregation joining on the second and third verses. As always, it was good to see Westminster's own Young Rejoicers learning to give God all praise.



On Maundy Thursday, the church gathered for the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper around tables in the style of John Calvin's church in Geneva, which itself echoes Jesus's last supper which was celebrated around a table with the disciples seated next to each other.

On Good Friday, Westminster visited First United Methodist Church for their annual Tenebrae service. Jeanie Pollard and Dave Carlson provided music during the service, with Emily Winter and Virginia Shurley serving as two youth readers.

The Easter sunrise service had a good crowd with a number of new and annual visitors. Worshippers gathered around a floral cross in the courtyard. The service was broadcast on Facebook Live with several viewers from places like Missouri, Michigan, Washington State, and New Jersey.



The choir led a procession into worship at 10:30 a.m. on Easter, with the congregation joining on the verses of "Jesus Christ is Risen Today." It was, as always, so good to see many long-time and new faces together to celebrate the Resurrection.

ANNUAL EASTER EGG HUNT

Thank you to everyone who brought plastic eggs and candy for Westminster's annual Easter Egg Hunt.

Westminster's children were able to hunt for more than 500 Easter Eggs after worship on Palm Sunday. Everyone went home happy with lots of candy in tow!

FROM THE MISSIONS COMMITTEE: TEACHER APPRECIATION BREAKFAST

The Missions Committee will sponsor a Teacher Appreciation Breakfast at Gulfport's Central Middle School on April 24. The committee will provide pastries, juice, fruit, and other assorted items for a delicious continental breakfast. Westminster is pleased to be able to support our local schools and their faculties.



City of Light

APRIL 14-16th

Sunday | 4:30-7:30pm
Monday | 5:30-7:30pm
Tuesday | 5:30-7:30pm

HOPE FEST 2024

BARKSDALE PAVILION
GULFPORT, MS

featuring...

- LIVE FOOD
- WORSHIP TRUCKS
- NON-PROFIT NETWORKING
- TESTIMONIES OF HOPE

A FESTIVAL FOR FAMILIES + SERVICES FOR OUR COMMUNITY ON THE MS GULF COAST



WILL YOU LEND A HAND IN WORSHIP?

Each week, a small pool of volunteers operate the sanctuary's sound system and livestream camera. Would you be willing to help by being on our substitute list? These two systems are relatively simple to learn, and allow people to hear—and especially for shut ins and prospective visitors—to see what we do in worship. Youth are welcome to help! Simply see Chip Westbrook after worship to schedule an orientation to our equipment.



UPCOMING IN WORSHIP

Sunday Mornings: "The Story"

Westminster has begun its 31-week journey through the Bible using "The Story," a highly-readable and abridged version of the Bible using selections from the New International Version (NIV). This whole church effort--for children, youth, and adults--is meant to enable all of Westminster's members and friends to encounter the grand story of salvation together. Copies of "The Story" are available at thestory.com or other online sellers such as Amazon.

- April 7: Acts 1:6-11. New Beginnings. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.
April 14: Acts 15:1-21. Paul's Mission to the Gentiles.
April 21: II Timothy 4:9-22. Paul's Final Word.
April 28: Revelation 22:1-7a. One Story Ends: Another Begins. End of Series.

Westminster Choir

Westminster's choir sings during worship on Sundays. Would you like to give it a try? Join the choir for practice at 10 a.m. in the sanctuary before Sunday morning worship.

Youth Sunday

Mark your calendars for May 19: Westminster's LifeHouse Youth will lead in worship.

SAVE THE DATE!



Vacation Bible School: June 24-28



Church Clean Up: Westminster was busy March 23! Many thanks to everyone who came to spruce up the grounds in time for Easter. The team weeded, added pine straw to the flower beds, and planted colorful flowers for the spring. Thank you for all the work to keep Westminster beautiful.



REVELATION BIBLE STUDY



Revelation: A Study

Tuesdays at 11:30 a.m. April 9-June 4 (except May 7)

Westminster began a new study on Revelation April 9. This weekly gathering will continue through June 4 each Tuesday at 11:30 a.m., with the exception of May 7. Did you miss the first study? No worries: Come on to the next one.

April 9: Opening Session

Introductory matters and Revelation 1:1-8

April 16: Christ's Message to the Churches

Revelation 1:9-3:22

April 23: On Earth as It Is in Heaven: A Call to Worship

Revelation 4:1-5:14

April 30: The Seven Seals

Revelation 6:1-8:1

May 7: Break

May 14: The Seven Trumpets

Revelation 8:2-11:19

May 21: The Unholy Trinity

Revelation 12:1-14:20

May 28: The Seven Bowls

Revelation 15:1-19:10

June 4: The End: Victory Belongs to the Lamb

Revelation 19:11-22:21

Can't make Tuesday during the day? If you and a group of Westminster members or friends would like to form an evening study on Revelation, please contact Pastor Will and he will be glad to help establish another opportunity to meet.

SUNDAY SCHOOL—FOR ALL AGES: Adults and children of all ages meet every Sunday at 9:15 a.m. to learn from well-prepared teachers more about the faith into which they were baptized. In September, all classes began using our church-wide study “The Story” as the basis for their curriculum. Children’s classes meet in the Christian Education Building and the adult class meets in the Library.



MAKING CHANGE

For the last two years, Westminster’s Sunday School children have participated in the Samaritan’s Purse Operation Christmas Child. The church’s young people are grateful to everyone who has helped them collect items for shoeboxes full of goodies, which have been shipped to children across the world. This year, the session has authorized the children to place a glass container in the narthex near the Operation Christmas Child collection area. Would you help them by dropping in any spare change you might have throughout this year? These coins will help defray shipping costs for the shoeboxes the Sunday School children send this Christmas.



SMALL GROUP GATHERINGS

Westminster Diners: Teresa and Mark Alspaugh hosted Westminster Diners in March. As always, a good time was had by all. On April 27, Amy and Eli Underhill will host that month’s gathering at their very own Circle Hook Distillery. The congregation is invited to this gathering for a shared picnic beginning at 4 p.m. Bring your favorite picnic side and beverage.

Lunch Bunch: The ladies Lunch Bunch will gather at 11:30 a.m. at Patio 44 in Gulfport for food and fellowship on April 26. All women are welcome!



Rise and Shine: The men’s Rise and Shine breakfast continues monthly at the Gulfport Cracker Barrel. All men are welcome at 7 a.m. The April gathering was April 2; the May gathering will be May 7.

Wind Down: The women’s Wind Down social meets ordinarily on the second Wednesday of each month. April’s gathering will be a week later than usual: April 17. Sarah Gregory will host at her home at 6 p.m.

Revelation Bible Study: A new study through Revelation began April 9. This group will meet each Tuesday at 11:30 a.m. for lunch and a walk through the text. Many thanks to Lynda Gary for providing a delicious taco soup for the first week. Sherry Shonk will provide lunch April 16. See below for schedule and outline.

DR. AND MRS. C.A. WALKER, JR. SCHOLARSHIP



Do you have a college student in your immediate family? Applications are now open for the Dr. C.A. and Helen Walker Scholarship. These scholarships, funded by generous gifts in member of Dr. and Mrs. Walker, both charter members of Westminster, are awarded on an annual basis depending on the endowment’s returns.

Applications are invited to apply before May 31, 2024, by sending a scholarship request along with your college plans to:

Dr. and Mrs. C.A. Walker, Jr. Scholarship Foundation
c/o Westminster Presbyterian Church
5005 Lawson Ave.
Gulfport, MS 39507

PRAYER LIST UPDATES



The prayer group is in the process of cleaning up and restarting the prayer list. If you have a previously listed prayer request that you would like to remain on the prayer list, please contact Karen Barnard or the church office or make a note on the registry of fellowship bulletin tear off on Sunday.

ORGAN UPDATE: Westminster extends its sincere thanks to the Magnolia Presbyterian Church (EPC) in Magnolia, Mississippi for giving us a temporary organ to use in worship while Westminster’s pipe organ is being repaired.



Jeanie Pollard, LeAnn Davis, Pete Bloss, Scott Winter, Will Shurley, Chip Westbrook, and Louis Congleton all traveled at various times to Magnolia to see the instrument and secure it for travel. Scott Winter even used his technical skill to make adjustments to the instrument so it would be ready for use by Easter.

Westminster’s insurance company has sent an adjustor, who is also a certified organ technician, to look at the pipe organ. Currently, he is submitting his evaluation and recommendations to the insurance company for full repairs. In the meantime, he was able to stabilize two divisions, i.e. one manual, or keyboard, and the pedal board, so that approximately 2/3 of the instrument are playable. Updates on the electrical repairs and associated costs will be forthcoming.



GET TO KNOW YOUR CHURCH: JOIN A FELLOWSHIP GROUP THIS YEAR

Did you know that Westminster has many opportunities for its members and friends to enjoy each other's company? As part of the church's strategic plan, Westminster encourages each member to be a part of a group outside of worship—and to invite friends to join in.

Adult Sunday School

Meets each Sunday at 9:15 a.m. in the Library.
Class covers various biblical and theological topics throughout the year.
Contact: Ted Hammer

Children's Sunday School

Meets each Sunday at 9:15 a.m. in the CE Building.
Young children learn basic bible stories and youth learn more about their theological heritage.
Contact: Mary Ellen Thornhill

Prayer Group

Meets each Tuesday at 10 a.m. in the Library
Participants manage the weekly prayer list, pray for the church and world, and participate in monthly communion at Summerfield.
Contact: Karen Barnard, Rosemary Chaloult, or Lynda Gary

LifeHouse Youth

Meets three Sundays a month at 5 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall and Youth Room.
Group explores biblical and theological topics and their application to real life.
Contact: Alice Bellanger

NEW: LifeHouse Families

Families and children travel periodically for a fun activity such as bowling, movie nights, etc.
Contact: Alice Bellanger

Westminster Diners

Meets monthly in private homes or a restaurant for fellowship. April 27 picnic at Underhill's Circle Hook Distilling at 4 p.m.
Contact: Karen Barnard

Lunch Bunch

Meets last Friday of each month at 11:30 a.m. in a local restaurant for fellowship. April 26 meeting will be at Patio 44 in downtown Gulfport.
Contact: Rachel Price

NEW: Rise and Shine Men's Breakfast

Meets first Tuesdays at 7 a.m. at Gulfport's Cracker Barrel for fellowship.
Contact: Will Shurley or Jason Gregory

NEW: Wind Down Women's Social

Meets monthly on a Wednesday at 6 p.m. for fellowship. The April 17 meeting will be at Sarah Gregory's home.
Contact: Anna Kate Shurley

Adult Choir and Special Music

Meets as needed to prepare special music.
Contact: Jeanie Pollard

Also during the year, Westminster hosts occasional confirmation and communicant classes for youth and children and weekday bible studies. Look in upcoming newsletters for more information.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

April

- 1 Ted Hammer
- 1 Gracey Busby
- 2 Christie Batson
- 7 Amy Underhill
- 9 Pete Bloss
- 15 Katy Symmes
- 16 Briggs Nault
- 19 Lilah Congleton
- 19 Joe Gewin
- 21 Mallory Symmes
- 22 Elaine Dukes
- 23 Marlee Stiglets
- 24 Andrew Allen
- 30 John Heath

May

- 1 Peter Gregory
- 4 Chad Bryant
- 4 Tristan Mahand
- 6 Caroline Underhill
- 9 Colt Busby
- 15 Theresa Moncrief
- 16 Owen Bellanger
- 23 Christine Mahand
- 23 Donna Gewin
- 24 Virginia Shurley
- 25 Rena Dukes
- 27 Ayden Pickich
- 30 Cummings King



WHERE CAN YOU HELP?

Would you like to share a musical talent in worship? Visit Westminster's homebound member? Help keep the grounds looking spiffy? Please contact our session committee chairs for more information about opportunities to serve.

- ◇ Chip Westbrook: Stewardship
- ◇ Scott Winter: Worship
- ◇ Lynda Gary: Discipleship Formation
- ◇ Ted Hammer: Congregational Life
- ◇ Rachel Price: Missions
- ◇ Cummings King or Jim Roberts: Property
- ◇ Ted Hammer: Nominating



TITHE.LY ONLINE AND APP-BASED GIVING

Westminster is set up for online and app-based giving. Visit gulfportchurch.org to give online, or download the secure Tithely app from Android or Apple to your phone and search for Westminster to give via app. For additional information, please call the church office at (228) 864-3143.



Alcoholics Anonymous meets weekly on Thursdays at 6 p.m. in the C.E. Building. For more information, call the church office at (228) 864-3143.

WESTMINSTER'S SCOUTS



Cub Scout Pack 209: Cub Scout Pack 209 keeps hoppin'! Each den continues to pursue completion of their various adventures leading to the next rank. On April 6, the Gulfport Fire Department and Police Department, along with McGruff the Crime Dog, came to Westminster to offer information on safety and child identification for the cub scouts and their parents.



Boy Scout Troop 209: Boy Scout Troop 209 hosted their first camp out March 22-23. They visited the Jones County farm of long-time Troopmaster Glen East and camped, learned to drive tractors, fished, and enjoyed a great time. The Boy Scouts meeting each Tuesday at 7 p.m. at the troop hut next to Gulfport Fire Station #5 in Bayou View.



Girl Scout Troop 3542: The Girl Scouts visited Infinity Science Center for a STEM fair this month. They looked through telescopes, learned about the April eclipse, and enjoyed a great time with friends.



HOME COMMUNION AND COMMUNION AT SUMMERFIELD: Westminster is a community of faith that gathers to worship the risen Lord, to hear his Word, and to partake of his sacraments. Gathering for worship is the most basic right and responsibility of church membership: Neglecting to meet together does harm to the spiritual growth of the individual and also to the spiritual health of the church body overall.

However, the session knows well there are members of our church who by virtue of health or other condition simply cannot leave their homes or gather in a crowd; otherwise, they would joyfully be part of the worshipping body. For those members, the session has long authorized home delivery of the communion elements by the pastor and a ruling elder. This home communion service is an extension of the Lord's Table around which the congregation has gathered for worship: A ruling elder is required to join the pastor in home communion, in fact, as he or she functions as a representative of the gathered congregation.

The session recognizes beloved members of this church have been confined to their homes and have missed the simple joys of going to restaurants, making grocery trips, and living life as we know it. We want to make sure the experience of God's love and grace as signified by the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is not something that must be missed. Providing for communion with God and one another is among the session's greatest joys and responsibilities.

Westminster continues to host a brief communion service at Summerfield Senior Living each month on the third Thursday at 2 p.m. Westminster members and friends are welcome to attend and to visit with Summerfield residents.

If you have been unable to leave your home, and would like to receive Communion, please let Pastor Will or any elder know: We will be happy to arrange it for you.

APRIL 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
31 Children's Sunday School, 9:15 a.m. Adult Sunday School, 9:15 a.m. Worship, 10:30 a.m.	1 Cub Scouts, 6 p.m.	2 Prayer Group, 10 a.m.	3	4 AA Meeting, 6 p.m.	5	6
7 Children's Sunday School, 9:15 a.m. Adult Sunday School, 9:15 a.m. Worship, 10:30 a.m. LifeHouse Youth, 5-7 p.m.	8	9 Rise & Shine Men's Breakfast, 7 a.m. Prayer Group, 10 a.m. Missions Committee, 6:30 p.m.	10	11 AA Meeting, 6 p.m. Discipleship Formation, 6 p.m.	12	13
14 Children's Sunday School, 9:15 a.m. Adult Sunday School, 9:15 a.m. Worship, 10:30 a.m. LifeHouse Youth, 5-7 p.m.	15 Cub Scouts, 6 p.m.	16 Prayer Group, 10 a.m.	17 Wind Down Women's Social at Sarah Gregory's home, 6 p.m.	18 AA Meeting, 6 p.m. Highlands & Islands Meeting, 6 p.m.	19	20
21 Children's Sunday School, 9:15 a.m. Adult Sunday School, 9:15 a.m. Worship, 10:30 a.m. <i>No LifeHouse Youth</i>	22	23 Prayer Group, 10 a.m.	24 Teacher Appreciation at Central Middle	25 AA Meeting, 6 p.m.	26 Lunch Bunch, 11:30 a.m., Patio 44 in Gulfport.	27
28 Children's Sunday School, 9:15 a.m. Adult Sunday School, 9:15 a.m. Worship, 10:30 a.m. LifeHouse Youth, 5-7 p.m.	29	30 Prayer Group, 10 a.m.	1	2 AA Meeting, 6 p.m.	3	4



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SMALL GROUP GATHERINGS

- ◇ **Revelation Bible Study:** *Meets Tuesdays at 11:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall.*
- ◇ **Wind Down Women's Social:** *Meets April 17 at 6 p.m. at Sarah Gregory's home.*
- ◇ **Lunch Bunch:** *Meets on April 26 at 11:30 a.m. at Patio 44 in Gulfport.*
- ◇ **Westminster Diners:** *Meets on April 27 for a picnic at Underhill's Circle Hook Distilling at 4 p.m.*
- ◇ **Rise and Shine Men's Breakfast:** *Meets first Tuesdays at 7 a.m. at Gulfport's Cracker Barrel for fellowship.*