

THE PARISH BELL

WESTWOOD FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



“See.” | Rev. Dr. Rich Jones

46 They came to Jericho. As he and his disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, Bartimaeus son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the roadside. 47 When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout out and say, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” 48 Many sternly ordered him to be quiet, but he cried out even more loudly, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” 49 Jesus stood still and said, “Call him here.” And they called the blind man, saying to him, “Take heart; get up, he is calling you.” 50 So throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. 51 Then Jesus said to him, “What do you want me to do for you?” The blind man said to him, “My teacher, let me see again.”

52 Jesus said to him, “Go; your faith has made you well.” Immediately he regained his sight and followed him on the way.

When I was a kid, we used to take trips to Mammoth Cave in KY. I remember a couple of the tours of the cave. It was always fun to see the stalagmites and stalagmites coming from the floor and ceiling. Of course, on every tour, at some point in the cave, the tour guide would have everyone stand in the center of a large cavern, and then turn off the lights. Of course, it was disorienting, you couldn't see a thing! Not even your hand being put right in front of you.

Our main character in our gospel passage knows what it's like to not be able to see in the dark. Bartimaeus, or

In this newsletter you can expect:

Pastor's Monthly Message

Music Ministries Update

Mission & Outreach

Thanksgiving & Christmas Efforts

Thanksgiving Butter Drive

Congregational Life

Youth & Family Programming

Deacons Report

Save the Dates & Monthly Calendar

PASTOR'S MESSAGE (CONT.)

Bartimaeus, or Bart, is a blind beggar. In 1st century culture, if you are blind, you don't have many options. You are pushed aside, not useful to society, not productive, and forced to make a living by begging, by leading on the hospitality of others.

Now, Bartimaeus has a name, has an identity. He's the son of Timaeus. He has had relationships, he is a part of a family. But, his blindness has left him isolated, alone, left out. Could you imagine the hurt that he felt, the desperation?

When Jesus comes walking down the road, leaving Jericho, surrounded by a large crowd. Bartimaeus senses the excitement of the crowd, when he hears its Jesus, he shouts out, have mercy on me Son of David! He's using Son of David in order to get Jesus to notice that he's connected to him, to show him mercy. I have to admit, I respect Bart! He had some moxie, he was desperate, but he was also filled with hope one last time.

Well, the disciples have places to go, they don't have time for this guy...yet, Jesus calls Bart to him and asks, what do you want me to do? Bart springs up, comes to him and says, my teacher, an address of honor, help me to see again. Jesus says that his faith has made him whole, that he is healed.

His sight returns, and, he follows Jesus.

Friends, as I read the gospel lesson, I'm not sure who the blind persons were in this story. Sure, Bart was physically blind, but the disciples had eyes to see, yet they couldn't see the possibility of the moment. Folks in this story could not "see" one another! Yet, Jesus saw them and saw the blind man...really saw them...and that enabled the blind man to not only have his physical sight, but to "see" Jesus. Isn't it a gift when we can be present with someone and they see us, they don't see things on the surface, but the real in us! What a gift!

Rev. Dr. Rich Jones

Pastor

Rich@wfpc.org | ext. 106

Friends, this is the kind of faith that God is calling us towards, the faith of Bartimaeus. We are called to be in the moment, to seize it. We have opportunities in our lives, daily, to live in hope and expectation. God wants to deliver us out of the darkness and into the light. Darkness, for a season, is a good thing...it may give us rest, perspective, and growth. When seeds are planted in the ground, it is dark...with nourishment from the soil, water, etc. those seeds push through the resistance, grow strong and move towards the sun, towards light, which also gives growth to blossom. God wants to restore our relationships, to restore our sense of community, to restore us...to blossom and be all that we were intended to be... God wants us to "see" ourselves, to "see" others, and to know that God always sees us, the real us, and loves us!

And, God's called us to notice the blind beggars, or those in our pews and in our neighborhoods that we often look over. It seems as a church, that we also are like the disciples in that we get caught up in the "busyness" of this upcoming season...and with change and growth happening in our lives and in our congregation, it can be overwhelming. But, know that you are not alone, you have friends around you to help you, you do not have to be fearful or hesitant, you can live faithfully in exuberance with a God who is calling YOU to write a new story for your church that can bring hope and healing to your neighbors, and to one another.

PASTOR'S MESSAGE (CONT.)

PS- As thanksgiving approaches, we have much to be thankful for!

- Our staff continues to grow in deeper ways as we find ways to resource our congregation with imagination.
- Our session continues to lead with wisdom and care for this congregation.
- Our deacons are showing hospitality and care in amazing ways.
- We have welcomed the Rev. Rebecca Bosarge on to our staff as our Spiritual Formation Director and Westside Abbey "Abbess". The Westside Abbey continues to grow in ever deepening ways as we focus on our formation as humans made in the image of God.
- Our young adult staff, Jade and Adam, continue to form new communities for young adults.
- WFPC, in partnership with Westwood Works and the Common Good Alliance, and thanks to a grant from the Presbytery, is making deeper connections for the "common good" of Westwood and beyond.
- Our Iona Pilgrimage was AMAZING and we look forward to another one next summer, even as we recognize that ALL of us are everyday pilgrims on a journey towards being all that God intends.
- Our worshipping community continues to be a source of such encouragement, we've welcomed new members, have had baptisms, and are experiencing deepening community...not only on Sundays, but throughout the week.

CS Lewis talks about the "deeper magic", our stewardship campaign this year used the word "electric"...whatever words you use, there is something beautiful at Westwood First Presbyterian. In a season such as this in our culture, it is so good to be a part of Westwood First!

MUSIC MINISTRIES

FALL MUSIC MINISTRY

Happy Fall, everyone!

Routines and schedules abound! And so does our Music Ministry! Chancel Choir and Chancel Bells are rehearsing music to enhance our worship services. We welcome singers and ringers to join us!

We are planning ahead for Advent – Christmas Bell Music on Sunday, December 14 and Special Music with Choir and Chamber Orchestra on Sunday, December 21. We continue to appreciate the leadership and talents of our Chancel Choir soloists, who you will continue to hear in upcoming services.

Our Concert Series began with a rousing program of salsa music on Sunday, October 5. We continue the series on Sunday, November 16, when Cincinnati Sound Chorus performs a program of acapella (unaccompanied) selections for 65 (and more) treble voices! You will enjoy their unique sound and energy. They are fresh from International Competition. We are excited to welcome them to the Series! Please join us – 2:30 p.m.

We are thankful and blessed to be able to offer concerts and worship service music to enrich our souls and fill our hearts with goodness.

Thanks be to God for all God gives!

Blessings to you all,

Heather MacPhail
Director of Music Ministries

CITY GOSPEL MISSION'S THANKSGIVING EXCHANGE AND THE CHRISTMAS STORE AT WESTWOOD FIRST

It's time again to get ready for the City Gospel Mission's Thanksgiving Exchange and The Christmas Store. Westwood First will host these events again for the eighth year and we need your help!

Dates of Events

Shoppers will come in two time periods for both events:

9:00am – 12:30pm & 6:00pm – 8:00pm

The Thanksgiving Exchange will be open to shoppers for 5 days: Thursday through Saturday,

November 20, 21, 22, closed Sunday; reopens Monday and Tuesday,

November 24 & 25.

The Christmas Store will be open to shoppers for 4 days: Wednesday through Saturday,

December 10, 11, 12 & 13.

How it Works

A network of participating urban churches refer families in need to City Gospel Mission. Again this year, WFPC will be referring families identified by Westwood School.

At the Thanksgiving Exchange, families are asked to pay \$25 and in exchange, they can select from a wide variety of food items, including a ham or turkey, to provide their family with a nice Thanksgiving dinner. Due to rising costs for these families, your mission dollars will offset this increase with a \$15 per family donation to keep their cost at \$10 per family.

Similarly, for The Christmas Store, referred families pay \$10/child. Parents can select from their choice of children's clothing, toys, or bikes (subject to limitations).

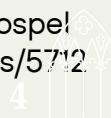
How WFPC can Help

Volunteer to be Parking Hosts – Sometimes it's tough for someone who hasn't been here before to find their way into our church. We station volunteer parking hosts at top of the Harrison Ave. driveway in the parking lot and also in the rear (main) parking lot. Our job is to make the visitors feel welcome and to direct them to the parking area and entrance to the church.

Please sign up for this by contacting Patti Grace at edoubleug@aol.com or (513)741-1589 or cell (513)290-6047 or Jeri Rathkamp at jrathkamp@fuse.net or (513)478-1787.

Give gifts through the City Gospel Mission Christmas Giving Tree in the Narthex of Take an ornament(s) from the tree and buy a toy and/or children's clothing to be sold at the Christmas Store held right here at WFPC. Please place the gifts under the tree, unwrapped, by Sunday, Dec. 7th. Gift wrap and ribbon donations are also appreciated.

Volunteer to help wrap gifts at the Christmas Store – Please check the City Gospel Mission website for details: https://volunteer.samaritan.com/custom/521/opp_details/5712



MISSION & OUTREACH

CITY GOSPEL THANKSGIVING EXCHANGE BUTTER DRIVE

It's "Butter" to Give than to Receive - Donate Generously to the Butter Drive –

Because City Gospel Mission has had some difficulty in the past in getting donations for butter, our congregation has been meeting that need. Our goal is to raise enough funds to cover the purchase of **500 pounds of butter**. Look for the bright yellow envelopes in the narthex marked **Butter Drive**. You may place your contribution directly in the offering plate or send it to the church office. Please make your contribution by **Sunday, November 23rd**. Of course, any contributions received later are certainly most welcome. And...this being a generous congregation, if we exceed our goal of funding the butter, any additional funds will be used to further support City Gospel Mission events for such things as additional food supplies, gift wrap, etc.

THE CHRISTMAS STORE SHOPPING GUIDE (All items must be NEW)

***GIFTS FOR OLDER AGE GROUP MOST IN DEMAND**

Gift Ideas for 9 – 18 YEAR OLDS (\$15-\$50 value)

Earbuds / Earphones Remote Control Cars
Cologne / Perfume Gift Sets
Sports Items: Basketballs/Footballs/Soccer Balls, etc.
Watches / Jewelry Board Games / Card Games
Journals / Colorful Pens
Cincinnati Bearcats shirts/hats
Makeup / Hair Care Kits Purses
Art / Craft Creation Sets
OPI Nail Polish Burt's Bees Chapstick
Nike Socks Buffalo Plaid PJ Bottoms
Bengals shirts/hoodies/hats

Gift Ideas for 6 – 8 YEAR OLDS (\$15-\$50 value)

Toss & Catch Games
Dolls (African-American or Latino dolls would be great)
Board Games
Legos/Building Sets
Jewelry Art/Craft Creation Sets
Action Figures Educational Toys
Earbuds / Earphones

MISSION & OUTREACH (CONT.)

CHRISTMAS STORE SHOPPING GUIDE CONTINUED

Gift Ideas for INFANT – 5 YEAR OLDS (\$15-\$50 value)

Developmental Toys
Dolls (African-American or Latino dolls would be great)
Educational Toys
"Matchbox" Cars
Stuffed Animals (NEW)
Super Hero or Princess Costumes

Clothing Considerations for ALL AGE GROUPS (\$20-\$50 value)

Coats & Hoodies
Pro-Sports Apparel (especially Bengals, Bearcats)
Top & Pant Outfits for toddlers Fashion Sweaters & Dress Shirts

CLOTHING SIZE BY AGE GROUP -- We need more of the LARGER sizes

- **Infants to 24 months:** 0-24 mos. 2T-3T
- **2-5 year-olds:** 4T-5T, 4-5, 6-6X, 6X-7
- **6-8 year-olds:** 7-8, 9-10, 10-12
- **9-12 year-olds:** 12-14, 14-16, 16-18, 18-20, Youth Sm M L
- **13-18 year-olds:** Teen Small, Medium, Large, XL, XXL, 3X, 4X

The children's parents will be shopping for the items, so wrapping your donation is not necessary.

Please label your donations with the age & gender of child for whom those items would be appropriate.

**Please deliver items to church by DECEMBER 7
THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!**

WestFed Food Pantry Needs

November 2025

- **Boxed Pasta**
- **Spaghetti Sauce**
- **Meat Sauce (no glass jars, please)**

Please place your donations in the lower white bin located in the side Narthex.

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CHEERS FOR CHARITY: SUPPORTING WESTSIDE FOOD PANTRIES



CHEERS FOR CHARITY

Join us on
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12
from 5-10pm

10% of Westside Brewing sales
go to My Neighbor's Place & Cincinnati Urban Promise
when you say **"I'm here for Cheers for Charity."**

We'll also be **collecting nonperishable
food & hygiene items.**

**LET'S WORK TOGETHER TO HELP OUR
FOOD INSECURE NEIGHBORS + FRIENDS**

CINCINNATI URBAN PROMISE
To Teach. To Empower. To Love.

Hanging of the Greens

Join us on Saturday November 29th at 9:30 p.m.

Come and join fellow church members and friends to decorate the church for the Christmas season. We have fun during the decorating and still get done quickly. Would like to see some new faces! There will be coffee available, and bring goodies to share if you so desire. Many hands make light work.

Hope to see you there! Call or text Linda Gardner with questions...513-259-4540



YOUTH & FAMILIES PROGRAMMING AT WFPC

In October we hosted seven families on three Saturdays to learn to make slime! It was a great time of building friendships, creating and having fun!



If you would like to help in November for Cooking Classes contact Jade Kendall at: jade@wfpc.org or Adam Hayden at 812-430-4464 or adam@wfpc.org

WFPC DEACONS REPORT

In the two weeks leading up to World Communion Sunday, the Deacons served communion to four of our members who are unable to attend church in person. We enjoyed and felt privileged to have the opportunity to include these dear ones as part of our Westwood First communion, as well as that of the Christian Church universal.

Thank you to all those who continue to volunteer to serve as greeters on Sunday morning! We appreciate you!

Are there other ways we can be extending hospitality to friends old and new? We welcome your ideas!

Your Deacons,
Dale, Janice, Phil and Debbie

Birthdays

Nancy Renken	Nov 1
Blake Wanek	Nov 3
Carol Carpenter	Nov 4
Jane Patton	Nov 5
Sharon Ulrich	Nov 9
Denny Richmond	Nov 10
Vicki Schickner	Nov 11
John Rathkamp	Nov 11
Hannah Babicke	Nov 12
Diana Cron	Nov 13
Barbara Holub	Nov 14
Ross Renken	Nov 20
Susan Greenlee	Nov 21
Daun Lameier	Nov 23
Oscar Baverman	Nov 23
Geri Suttle	Nov 24
Mary Beth Baverman	Nov 30

Anniversaries

Janice & Michael Kahsar	Nov 11 58 years
Nancy & William Renken	Nov 20 43 years
Brian & Diana Cron	Nov 26 31 years

Sunday Sextons

Nov 2: Bruce Smith
Nov 9: John Rathkamp
Nov 16: Bode Olakanmi
Nov 23: Tony Upton
Nov 30: Dave Ulrich

Westside Abbey | Tues Nov 11th 6PM

Lead by Rev. Becky Bosarge

11/11 **The Spiritual Practice of Remembering**

November is a month that invites us to remember. On All Saints/All Souls Days we remember and honor those who have gone before us. Thanksgiving invites us to remember and be grateful. and be grateful. Our sacred text, also, invites us to remember and to experience the Divine as One Who Remembers:

But God remembered Noah and all the animals that were with him in the ark
You must not mistreat or oppress foreigners in any way. Remember, you yourselves were once strangers in Egypt
According to your steadfast love remember me
Do this in remembrance of me

A spiritual posture and intentional practice of "remembering" can offer wisdom, perspective, encouragement during difficult times, and a hope for a future not dictated by but informed by mistakes of the past.

If you "remember" bring something with you – an object or even an idea – from a biological or spiritual ancestor that helps you "remember" something important about yourself or the world.

And Save the Date for Tuesday December 9 when Diane Heilmann and Rev. Becky Bosarge with lead a discussion on Ordinary Mystery.

November 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
Choir Warmup Traditional Worship Service	9:45am 10:30am Westwood Women's Club10:30am Administration & Personnel Mee...5:30pm Scouts BSA Court of Honor6pm Scout Troops & Cub Pack Meeti...6:30pm	Little Village Westside Abbey 9am 6pm	Little Village 9am	Little Village Bell Choir Choir Practice 9am 1pm 7pm	Ping Pong Club 9:30am	Scouts BSA Pancake Breakfast
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Scouts BSA Pancake Breakfast Choir Warmup Traditional Worship Service	Election Day set up 3pm Scout Troops & Cub Pack Meeti...6:30pm	Election Day Little Village 9am	Election Day Tear Down Little Village Mission & Outreach Meeting 8am 9am 5:30pm	Little Village Bell Choir Choir Practice 9am 1pm 7:30pm	Ping Pong Club 9:30am	Linton PB&J Cooking Event 10:30am 1pm
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Choir Warmup Traditional Worship Service BSA board of review	9:45am 10:30am 4pm Order of the Arrow Meeting5pm Scout Troops & Cub Pack Meetin...6:30pm Circle 1 Meeting7pm	Little Village9am Westside Abbey6pm Venturing Crew Information Sess...6:30pm	Little Village9am Stewardship & Operations Meeti...5:30pm Westwood Historical Society Meeting7pm	Little Village Bell Choir Choir Practice 9am 1pm 7pm	Ping Pong Club 9:30am	City Gospel Mission setup for Thanksgi... Circle 6 Meeting9:30am Cooking Event1pm
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Choir Warmup Traditional Worship Service Concert Series	9:45am 10:30am 2:30pm City Gospel Mission setup for Thanksgi... Westwood Women's Club10:30am Scout Troops & Cub Pack Meeti...6:30pm	City Gospel Mission setup for Thanksgi... Little Village 9am	City Gospel Mission setup for Thanksgi... Little Village9am Pack 107 Committee Meeting6pm Session Meeting6:30pm	City Gospel Mission Thanksgiving Excha... Little Village Bell Choir Choir Practice 9am 1pm 7pm	City Gospel Mission Thanksgiving Excha... Ping Pong Club 9:30am	City Gospel Mission Thanksgiving Excha... Cooking Event 1pm
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Choir Warmup Traditional Worship Service	9:45am 10:30am City Gospel Mission Thanksgiving Excha... Administration & Personnel Mee...5:30pm Scout Troops & Cub Pack Meeti...6:30pm	City Gospel Mission Thanksgiving Excha... Little Village9am Westside Abbey6pm	Little Village 9am	Cheryl Whiting family Thanksgiving Little Village 9am	Ping Pong Club 9:30am	
30	1	2	3	4	5	6
Choir Warmup Traditional Worship Service	9:30am 10:30am Scout Troops & Cub Pack Meetin...6:30pm	Little Village 9am	Little Village Mission & Outreach Meeting 9am 5:30pm	Little Village Bell Choir Choir Practice 9am 1pm 7:30pm	Ping Pong Club 9:30am	City Gospel Mission setup Christmas Store

CLERK OF SESSION

Diane Heilmann

DEACONS

Phil Zorn
Debbie Zorn
Dale Hedrick
Janice Kahsar

STAFF MEMBERS

Rev. Dr. Rich Jones, *Pastor*

Rev. Becky Bosarge, *Director of
Spiritual Formations*

Ally Larsson *Church
Administrator*

Heather MacPhail, *Director of
Music Ministries*

Andrew Wells, *Facilities
Manager*

Jade Kendall, *Young Adult &
Family Connector*

Leslie Mattie Rich, *Church
Administrative Assistant*

OUR CHURCH LEADERS

ADMINISTRATION & PERSONNEL

Ruling Elder: Bruce Smith,
Connie Graham

At-Large: Andy Patton,
Bill Seitz
Marc Baverman

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Ruling Elder: Jill Huber,
Mary Beth Baverman

At-Large: Lynn Lanman,
Jeri Rathkamp,
Bode Olankanmi,
Linda Gardner

MISSION & OUTREACH

Ruling Elder: Jason Dennison,
Mary Beth Baverman

At-Large: Lynn Lanman,
Jeri Rathkamp,
Beth Richmond,
Linda Gardner,
Sharon Ulrich,
Karl Graham,
Patti Grace,
Rhonda Boddy

WORSHIP & MUSIC

Ruling Elder: Bruce Smith,
Candee Witterstaetter

At-Large: Noelle Scheper

STEWARDSHIP & OPERATIONS

Ruling Elder: Holly Scheper,
Marc Baverman,
Dick Carpenter

At-Large: Tom Robison,
John Rathkamp,
Mary Ellen Betz,
Dale Nieman



WESTWOOD FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

3011 Harrison Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45211



Follow us!
@westwoodfirst

The Parish Bell is the monthly newsletter of Westwood First Presbyterian Church.

All visitors are welcome to worship with us on Sundays at our Traditional Service at 10:30AM.

Church Day Number: 513-661-6846

Reverend Dr. Rich Jones, Pastor

ext. 106

Reverend Rebecca Bosarge, Dir. of Spiritual Formation

Heather MacPhail, Organist/Director of Music Ministries

ext. 105

Ally Larsson, Church Administrator

ext. 104

Leslie Rich, Church Administrative Assistant

ext. 101

Andrew Wells, Facilities Manager

Jade Kendall, Young Adult & Family Connector