

# THE PARISH BELL

WESTWOOD FIRST  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



## “Darkness and Light” | Rev. Dr. Rich Jones

**“The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned.”**

**Matthew 4:16, NRSV**

Darkness to Light. Birth to life to death to resurrection.

Gardening is such a powerful metaphor for our lives. When you garden, you get messy, dirty. You dig deep and plant seeds into moist, rich, and dark soil. In that darkness, life is seeded, and begins to grow, drawing nourishment from the messy, but rich soil filled with nutrients. That life grows upwards towards the light, while also growing downwards to bring up nutrients to feed life heading towards the light that will cause it to blossom.

For life to come forward, it takes a while. A season. I love this time of the year because it's at the end of the seasonal life cycle. Things are dying, leaves falling, there is color, but it's also a time of shedding, of loss, and movement towards winter.

Winter is where things lie dormant, dead, and become compost to give nourishment for new life coming forth in the spring.

This is the cycle of life. In our modern, post-modern world, we want to try and to deny this cycle, but we cannot. It just does not happen. And, when we do, it causes so much disruption.

I believe that our society, in its current way of being, has tried to live in denial of this rhythm. It's why we have so much deep dissonance and division. We try to control things. We try to live

### In this newsletter you can expect:

Pastor's Monthly  
Message

Music Ministries  
Update

Per Capita Update

Mission & Outreach

Presbyterian Women

Congregational Life

Youth & Family  
Programming

Save the Dates

Monthly Calendar

## PASTOR'S MESSAGE (CONT.)

as if we are above this rhythm of life, and we become robbed of any sense of growth or contentment in life with ourselves, others, and God.

Into this season culturally, we find the universal church also trying to deny this rhythm, this cycle, and we are missing out on the fullness of life that each season brings.

It is hard, life is changing, disruptions and loss seem all around us.

Yet, at Westwood First Presbyterian, we have embraced this cycle of life. Our Presbyterian roots in the Church of Scotland and even beyond the formation of the Presbyterian Church gives us a symbol this cycle of life. Our Celtic Christian ancestors gave us the symbol of the Celtic Cross, that we see in every Presbyterian Church, when they put the circle on the Roman cross. To them, the Roman cross was a symbol of violence by the Roman Empire. The circle represents life, death, birth, the seasons, and a deep sense of oneness and presence that puts the violence of the cross into perspective.

As we, Westwood First Presbyterian, embrace this deeper reality, we are seeing all sorts of seeds being planted in our weekly worship services, our music program, our spiritual formation through Westside Abbey, our community engagement through the Westwood Common Good Project, our young adult connection, congregational life, our staff, our session, our mission engagement, and our building! And the list could go on! Seeds that are being planted, that have experienced darkness and cultivation, and through the gifts of folks in and around Westwood First, through donations, grants, and our "regular" church stewardship, are seeing so much deeper growth and abundant fruit.

When you read this, I will be on our pilgrimage to Iona with folks from our congregation and folks from the community that have come to Westwood First through the Westside Abbey. I am at peace. Real peace. Peace deeper than

**Rev. Dr. Rich Jones**

Pastor

[Rich@wfpc.org](mailto:Rich@wfpc.org) | ext. 106

the circumstances of this world, the things I think are evil and the things that I think reflect God's intentions. I still have a lot to process, we all do. But, I am learning to trust the Divine flow of life and to love well...to love beyond definition. I am growing. I still have a lot to understand in this season of change, but I am embracing what I do not know and trying to be present with myself, my family, friends, neighbors, and the amazing congregation of Westwood First Presbyterian!

The darkest time of the night is right before the sun rises. In the dark, we rest. We wait. We yearn to see what is happening in and around us. We also know that that we have to rest, we have to wait, we have to let the dark/light cycle work. If we go without sleep, we are miserable. If we sleep throughout the day, we don't move towards growth.

Friends, we are in a cycle, we are in a rhythm, we are in a season. It is a wild and weird one. Even a wonderful one here at Westwood First. In this moment, let's not race ahead, but let's embrace one another, ourselves, God, and this moment!

We may be in the dark at times, but we are growing, we may be yearning for resurrection, but we are gaining life even as we lose it as the scripture says.

I am so glad to be in this with you...this fall, and in every season of every year!

## PASTOR'S MESSAGE (CONT.)

Here's the amazing line-up of PCUSA ministers for the first three weeks of October while I'm away:

### **Pulpit Supply:**

October 5 – Rev. Troy Bronsink (World Communion Sunday)

October 12 – Rev. David Annett

October 19 – Rev. Hannah Quick

### **Pastors on Call\*:**

Rev. Dr. Ed Goode, (513) 335-1620

Rev. David Annett, (513) 477-9723

### **Session Moderator for October 15:**

Rev. David Annett

\*If you have a pastoral emergency, please also contact Leslie in the church office. (513) 661-6846 or [leslie@wfpc.org](mailto:leslie@wfpc.org)

# MUSIC MINISTRIES

Happy Fall – schedules, events, rehearsals, gatherings – all abound at Westwood First! The Chancel Choir has returned to offer music in worship, after a summer of lovely selections by our valued soloists! This fall, we welcome Megan Weaver as the soloist/section leader in the alto section. Megan writes:

I'm thrilled to be joining the Chancel Choir this season! During the week, I teach elementary music in the Winton Woods School District and also sing with the May Festival Chorus. I'm grateful for the opportunity to return to church music ministry and to be part of the choir here at Westwood First. Most weekends, you'll see me joined at church by my boyfriend, Avi, and his daughter, Aria. We've felt so welcomed and are glad to be part of this community.

Please join us in welcoming Megan!

This past week (September 25), the Chancel Bells returned to rehearsals! We have new pads on the tables, new cleaning cloths, new music – and lots of fun ahead! Our usual practice time is Thursdays, 1:30 p.m. We start at 1:00 this Thursday, and 2:00 Thursday, October 2 (to allow for PW time).

New members are always welcome in both choirs in our Music Ministry!

## **SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2:30 p.m. The 43rd season of our Concert Series begins!**

We are very excited to welcome Son del Caribe, an 11-piece band, performing music from the Caribbean. The ensemble's repertoire spans a wide spectrum of styles, including salsa, merengue, bachata, cumbia, bolero, and Afro-Caribbean folkloric rhythms, reflecting the cultural diversity of the islands and coasts that inspire its name. Their performances capture not only the joy and vitality of Caribbean music but also its historical depth, connecting audiences to the voices and traditions of generations past. "Every song has a story"! We are sure to enjoy this energetic and varied program! Bring your friends! The concert is free, with reception to follow. Let's fill the sanctuary!

To quote the hymn, "When the Morning Stars Together" –  
Lord, we bring our gift of music; Touch our lips and fire our hearts,  
Teach our minds and train our senses, Fit us for these sacred arts.  
Then with skill and consecration we would serve You, Lord, and give  
All our powers to glorify You, and in serving fully live.

Blessings to you all as we enjoy the Fall!

**Heather MacPhail**

Director of Music Ministries

[Heather@wfpc.org](mailto:Heather@wfpc.org) | ext. 105





# PER CAPITA UPDATE

## Per Capita is due in November

As a member church of the Presbytery of Cincinnati, Westwood First pays a per capita fee for each member in November. This year, the amount we owe is \$5,320, with a per capita fee of \$35 for our 152 members (as of 2023).

To date, members have only contributed \$1,740. So, we will need to make up the balance from other operating funds.

In the Presbytery of Cincinnati, the per capita apportionment helps cover essential operating expenses, including administrative costs, staff salaries, insurance, legal services, the annual audit, and committee support. A portion goes to General Assembly. The Presbytery provides many services to the member churches, including guidance, training, information sharing, and grants.

This year, WFPC has received \$28,000 from Presbytery to host the Soul Place and provide funding for our community outreach and youth efforts.

If you have not paid your Per Capita fee, please do so before November.

Note "Per Capita " on your check or envelope. If you have already paid but would like to cover the cost of a member who might be unable to pay, we welcome your donation.



# MISSION & OUTREACH (CONT.)

## Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities!

### **Adopt a Spot - Upcoming Dates September 27 & October 25**

Consider joining us as we continue with neighborhood cleanup on the 4th Saturday of each month. We meet in the church parking lot at 9:00 A.M. and then pick our route for the day. Safety vests, gloves, grabbers and garbage bags are provided. Interested? Call **Mary Beth Baverman (513) 678-2536**

### **Hoxworth Blood Center Blood Drive**

The Mission & Outreach Team has been approached to see if there is enough interest and donors to host a blood drive here at Westwood First. This could be done in conjunction with other westside churches based on participation. If you are a regular donor or interested in donating on a one time basis, we need to know! **Please contact Mary Beth Baverman (513) 678-2536 if interested. Thanks!**

## PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

### **PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN GATHERING - THURSDAY, OCTOBER 2 - 12 NOON**

All are invited to join us on Thursday, October 2 at 12 noon in Calvin Hall. Lunch (\$7.00) will be prepared by Circle 6, and we are happy to hear from our new church administrator, Leslie Mattie Rich. She will speak about the different efforts that she has been and is currently involved in around Westwood.

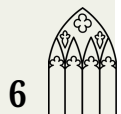
Make your reservation to Janice Kahsar by Monday, September 29 (513) 741-7608 or janicedk@fuse.net. Hope to see you there!

### **WestFed Food Pantry Needs**

**October 2025**

- **Peanut Butter**
- **Jelly**
- **Bars of Soap**

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



# CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

## ALL SAINTS SUNDAY - SUNDAY NOVEMBER 2, 2025

In early Christian tradition, saints' days began as a way to mark the anniversary of a martyr's death — his or her "birthday" as a saint. By the middle of the church's first millennium, there were so many martyrs (particularly due to the persecution of Diocletian) that it was hard to give them all their due. All Saints' Day was established as an opportunity to honor all the saints, known and unknown.

All Saints' Day has a rather different focus in the Reformed tradition. While we may give thanks for the lives of particular luminaries of ages past, the emphasis is on the ongoing sanctification of the whole people of God. Rather than putting saints on pedestals as holy people set apart in glory, we give glory to God for the ordinary, holy lives of the believers in this and every age. This is an appropriate time to give thanks to members of the community of faith who have died in the past year. We also pray that we may be counted among the company of the faithful in God's eternal realm.

All Saints' Day has been celebrated on November 1 since the year 835.

- [PCUSA.org](http://PCUSA.org)

**Please submit any names of those who have died that you'd like remembered to Leslie in the church office by October 24, 2025. You can email Leslie at [leslie@wfp.org](mailto:leslie@wfp.org).**





# YOUTH & FAMILIES PROGRAMMING AT WFPC

## COOKING SLIME-MAKING HIKING!

PRESENTED BY WESTWOOD  
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
THE PRESBYTERY OF CINCINNATI  
& FRIENDS FOR GOOD



Westwood First  
Presbyterian Church



PRESBYTERY  
OF CINCINNATI



### SLIME-MAKING CLASS

Saturdays from 3-4pm  
Oct 11, 18, 25

### COOKING CLASS

Details coming soon

### HIKING

Third Saturdays at 10am  
Sept 20, Oct 18, & Nov 15

For more details Contact  
Jade Kendal  
513-478-0867  
jade@wfpc.org

### INFORMATION

Classes take place at Westwood First  
(3326 Koenig Avenue, Cincinnati, OH  
45211). Hiking meet up point will be  
the Treehouse at Mt. Airy Forest.  
Classes are free, but space is limited  
so register now to secure your spot.

YES! Sign us up for

☐ SLIME-MAKING CLASS

☐ HIKING

☐ PLEASE SEND ME MORE  
INFO ABOUT THE  
COOKINGCLASS

Fill me out, take  
a pic, and text to  
812-430-4464

Participants Names \_\_\_\_\_

Guardian's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Guardian's Contact \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Yes! I give permission for my child to be photographed for use in education, nonprofit publication/presentations, including website pages, related to Westwood First Presbyterian Church & Friends for Good. This permission applicable for current, as well as future project use.

#### Consent and Release

Should injury or other reason require immediate medical treatment with respect to my child (youth) during any/all events, I hereby consent to such medical treatment as presented by a qualified physician. I also hereby release, acquit and discharge Westwood First Presbyterian Church or Friends for Good, their staff, and volunteers, from any and all injuries and liabilities from whatever cause, which arise out of or are a consequence of any/all events that involve my youth.

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Birthdays

|                       |        |
|-----------------------|--------|
| Elizabeth Durrell     | Oct 1  |
| Beth Dearwester       | Oct 3  |
| Holly Scheper         | Oct 3  |
| Mary Beth Klayer      | Oct 7  |
| Linda Gardner         | Oct 17 |
| Jane Ismael           | Oct 17 |
| W. Gregory Spilman    | Oct 18 |
| Zoe Anderson          | Oct 21 |
| Evelyn Robison (100!) | Oct 21 |
| Mace Justice          | Oct 24 |
| Michael Rechel        | Oct 26 |
| William Seitz III     | Oct 29 |
| William Dennison      | Oct 30 |

## Anniversaries

|                           |        |
|---------------------------|--------|
| Beth & Kent Kochheiser    | Oct 8  |
| Cathie & Lawrence DeFazio | Oct 14 |
| Holly & Nick Scheper      | Oct 9  |

## Sunday Sextons

October 5: Bruce Smith  
October 12: Tony Upton  
October 19: Andy Patton  
October 26: Bode Olakanmi

## SAVE THE DATES!

**Westside Abbey** | 2nd & 4th Tues. 6PM

### 10/14 **Loving the Unhoused**

- Jenny Perez and Jade Kendall
  - Mary Magdeline House

### 10/28 **Ioana Team Reflections on the Pilgrimage**

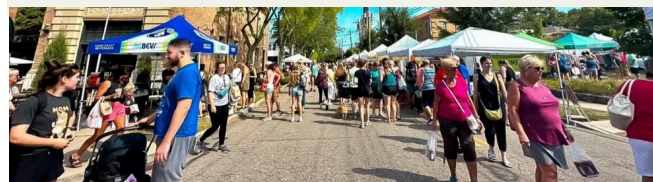
## Westwood Art and Wine Festival



Saturday, October 4 | 12 pm-7 pm

Enjoy a day of art, music and wine in the heart of Westwood!

## Westwood Farmers' Market



Thursdays through October 30 |  
4PM-&PM

Happening weekly in the parking lot at  
Westwood United Methodist Church

## Westwood Common Good



Thursday October 16 | 6-8PM

Here at Westwood First. Come dream  
about Westwood together.



October 2025

| SUN                                                                                       | MON                                                                                                              | TUE                                                            | WED                                                                                        | THU                                                                                                                | FRI                              | SAT                                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| 28<br><div>Choir ... 9:45am</div> <div>Tradit... 10:30am</div>                            | 29<br><div>Scout ...6:30pm</div>                                                                                 | 30<br><div>Little Villa...9am</div>                            | 1<br><div>Little Villa...9am</div> <div>Missio... 5:30pm</div>                             | 2<br><div>Little Villa...9am</div> <div>Presbyte... 12pm</div> <div>Bell Choir1pm</div> <div>Choir Pra...7pm</div> | 3<br><div>Ping P...9:30am</div>  | 4<br><div>Youth ...2:30pm</div>                              |
| 5<br><div>Choir ...9:45am</div> <div>Tradit... 10:30am</div> <div>Conce... 2:30pm</div>   | 6<br><div>Scout ...6:30pm</div>                                                                                  | 7<br><div>Little Villa...9am</div>                             | 8<br><div>Little Villa...9am</div> <div>Stewar... 5:30pm</div> <div>Westwoo... 7pm</div>   | 9<br><div>Little Villa...9am</div> <div>Bell Choir 1pm</div>                                                       | 10<br><div>Ping P...9:30am</div> | 11<br><div>Youth ...2:30pm</div>                             |
| 12<br><div>Choir ... 9:45am</div> <div>Tradit... 10:30am</div>                            | 13<br><div>Scout ...6:30pm</div> <div>Circle 1 M...7pm</div>                                                     | 14<br><div>Little Villa...9am</div> <div>Westside ...6pm</div> | 15<br><div>Little Villa...9am</div> <div>Pack 107 ...6pm</div> <div>Sessio... 6:30pm</div> | 16<br><div>Little Villa...9am</div> <div>Bell Choir1pm</div> <div>Westw... 5:30pm</div> <div>Choir Pra...7pm</div> | 17<br><div>Ping P...9:30am</div> | 18<br><div>Circle ...9:30am</div> <div>Youth ...2:30pm</div> |
| 19<br><div>Choir ... 9:45am</div> <div>Tradit... 10:30am</div>                            | 20<br><div>Scout ...6:30pm</div>                                                                                 | 21<br><div>Little Villa...9am</div>                            | 22<br><div>Little Villa...9am</div>                                                        | 23<br><div>Little Villa...9am</div> <div>Bell Choir1pm</div> <div>Choir Pra...7pm</div>                            | 24<br><div>Ping P...9:30am</div> | 25<br><div>Youth ...2:30pm</div>                             |
| 26<br><div>Choir ... 9:45am</div> <div>Tradit... 10:30am</div>                            | 27<br><div>West... 10:30am</div> <div>Admin... 5:30pm</div> <div>Scouts B...6pm</div> <div>Scout... 6:30pm</div> | 28<br><div>Little Villa...9am</div> <div>Westside ...6pm</div> | 29<br><div>Little Villa...9am</div>                                                        | 30<br><div>Little Villa...9am</div> <div>Bell Choir1pm</div> <div>Choir Pra...7pm</div>                            | 31<br><div>Ping P...9:30am</div> | 1<br><div>Scouts BSA Pan...</div>                            |
| 2<br><div>Scouts BSA Pa...</div> <div>Choir ... 9:45am</div> <div>Tradit... 10:30am</div> | 3<br><div>Election ...3pm</div> <div>Scout... 6:30pm</div>                                                       | 4<br><div>Election Day</div> <div>Little Villa...9am</div>     | 5<br><div>Election D...8am</div> <div>Little Villa...9am</div> <div>Missio... 5:30pm</div> | 6<br><div>Little Villa...9am</div> <div>Bell Choir1pm</div> <div>Choir ...7:30pm</div>                             | 7<br><div>Ping P...9:30am</div>  | 8<br><div>Linto... 10:30am</div>                             |



## CLERK OF SESSION

Diane Heilmann

## DEACONS

Phil Zorn  
Debbie Zorn  
Dale Hedrick  
Janice Kahsar

## STAFF MEMBERS

**Rev. Dr. Rich Jones**, *Pastor*

**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*

## 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

# OUR CHURCH LEADERS



## 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**

**Heather MacPhail**, Organist/Director of Music Ministries

**ext. 105**

**Ally Larsson**, Interim Church Administrator

**ext. 104**

**Leslie Mattie Rich**, Church Administrative Assistant

**ext. 101**

**Andrew Wells**, Facilities Manager

**ext. 250**

**Jade Kendall**, Young Adult & Family Connector