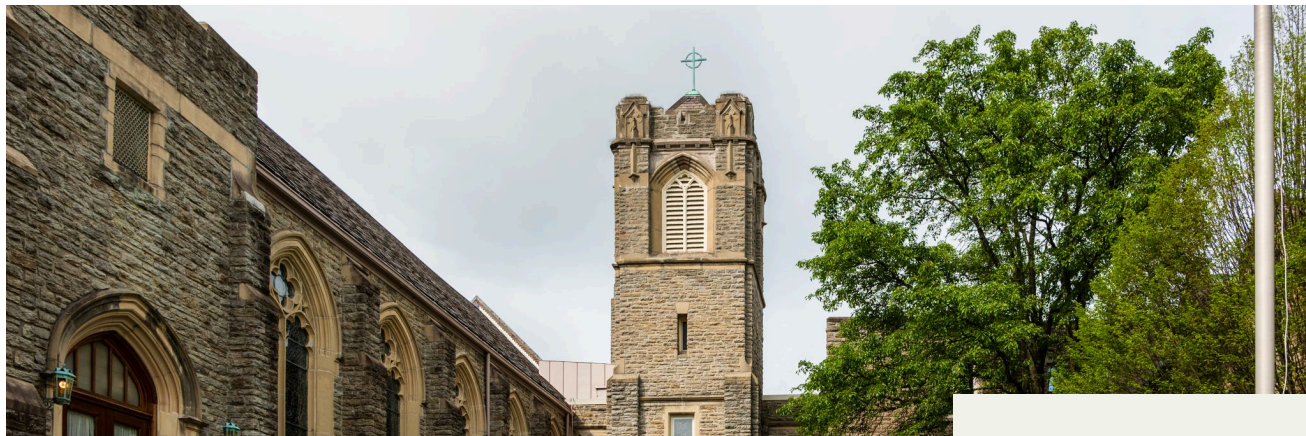


THE PARISH BELL

WESTWOOD FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



“Hesed” | Rev. Dr. Rich Jones

חֶסֶד

“Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed,” says the LORD, who has compassion on you.

- Isaiah 54:10, TNIV

We can all relate to this statement: change happens. That is good. It leads to questions, sometimes answers, and growth oftentimes when we embrace change and remember that we are not alone. We have each other, and we have God. A God who resides within us and all around us and is going through changes with us.

In the midst of change, we can have confidence that God is with us and God’s love for us will not change.

Yet, change can also bring anxiety, fear, and even a deep sense of unrest. In those times, we can have a desire to try and control things, to try to go back to the “way things were”. Deep down, we know we can’t, that life continues to move forward whether we like it or not.

Often, we are forced to deal with change through tragedy, personally or corporately.

Our country and world has experienced a lot of change.

(continued on next page...)

In this newsletter you can expect:

Pastor’s Monthly
Message

Music Ministries
Update

Anam Aite Gathering

Mission & Outreach

Presbyterian
Women

Youth & Family
Programming

Deacons Report

Save the Dates &
Monthly Calendar

PASTOR'S MESSAGE (CONT.)

It doesn't matter what our political or religious persuasions may have been, the amount of change in a short time has left us disoriented and not sure what to think or react. As we hear the heated cultural and political rhetoric, the lament of our Black and Brown and Asian brothers and sisters, the immigrant and the ones on the margins, and the violence that begets violence. We either react in anger, retreat, or we face it with curiosity and with a deeper trust that works towards deeper understanding and awareness.

On top of that, our own lives don't seem to pause much, we have personal changes in our local relationships and within us! It's important to note that the changes in culture, and in us, cause us to reflect personally and in our communities, but also in our institutions, businesses, churches, professions, etc.

In times of change, we can trust that God is with us. That trust leads us into deeper places within ourselves and our relationships with others.

At Westwood First Presbyterian, we are not oblivious to the cultural and personal changes happening around us and within us. We are having "brave conversations" with one another and demonstrating a deep trust that is giving us strength to face the changes in and around us. It is not a "blind trust", but a trust given with eyes wide

open...eyes open to seeing one another as humans made in the image of God and not as objects to be used or thrown away. And, as my friend Cormac Russell says, we "grow as fast as the speed of trust"...well, it is evident at WFPC that we have the trust and we are growing in deeper and different ways than we could have ever expected!

The Hebrew word "Hesed" is found throughout Scripture describing God. It means unfailing love, compassion, trust/faith, and intense loyalty to community.

May we continue to trust God's "hesed" by continuing to live in authentic, humble, honoring, and faithful community/relationships with each other, especially as we live into changing times and experience new wisdom and growth in ourselves and in our church.

Rev. Dr. Rich Jones

Pastor

Rich@wfpc.org | ext. 106

MUSIC MINISTRIES

Happy Easter Season! We hope the special music of Holy Week, Palm Sunday through Easter, is still ringing in your hearts! And we hope it was meaningful to you all.

The Chancel Bells rang on Palm Sunday, for their last “ring of the year”! We, as always, have enjoyed fellowship and fun at each rehearsal and gathering. We welcomed a new member in the bass section of the bells, Susannah, who came into the group after seeing the “Try Bell” flyer last September. We will start next fall with a repeat of the Try Bell Saturday gathering, so look for date and details then. We are gathering one more Thursday, May 15, for lunch and to “re-set” our rehearsal room. Let me know if you would like to join this fun group – any time!



The Chancel Choir will offer Easter Season music through June 1, Choir Recognition Sunday. We continue to enjoy the leadership of our section leaders throughout the year. Thank you for the support of our Music Ministry!



Our Concert Series concludes on Sunday, April 27, with the Culnan Duo, offering a wonderful program of violin/piano selections. Thank you for this support as well!

Through May and until Pentecost, we will be singing the Easter Doxology – Spread the good news o’er all the earth: Jesus has died and is risen, Alleluia!

And this Sunday (4/27), the choir will sing “Hymn of Promise”, offering words of hope and belief in the Resurrection! **Happy Easter, Happy Spring!**

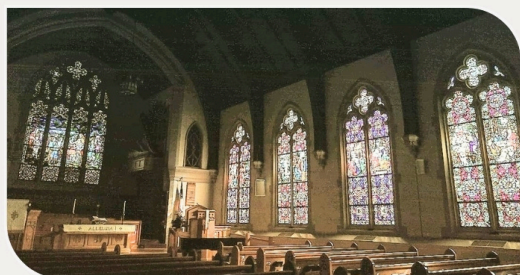
Heather MacPhail

Director of Music Ministries

Heather@wfpc.org | ext. 105

ANAM AITE (“SOUL PLACE”) GATHERING

We are very excited to be hosting our second annual gathering this May. This year's gathering will be based on short presentations along with creative, intentional conversational formats, small groups, interactive art explorations, meals, fellowship, and more! The focus is to have deep conversations and to come away from the gathering with a sense of community and humanity. Join us for an experience that you won't want to miss. We have already received registrations from clergy, community leaders, WFPC members, and Westwood neighbors - be sure to join us and spend time in “brave space”!



Explore Anam Aite (Gaelic for “Soul Place”) and the Celtic themes of “place, pilgrimage, poetry, and presence.” Flourish in humanity and community.



**Westwood First
Presbyterian Church**

Co-sponsored by the **Presbytery of Cincinnati**



“ANAM AITE” GATHERING MAY 30-31, 2025

**Does your soul long to share wisdom?
To listen deeply? To grow in hope? To belong?
Our souls do, too.**

Suggested
Admission:

\$30

Join us for:

- Five unique sessions
- Break-out workshops
- Meals & Social Mixers

Scan to Register



For assistance, email:
Noelle@wfpc.org

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Peter Block
Author & Consultant,
Cincinnati, OH



**Rev. Dr. Mary
Laymon**
Executive Director,
Tikkun Farm



**Rev. Dr. Alison
Jack**
Principal of New College,
University of Edinburgh



**Rev. Rolf
Billes**
Learning Manager,
Iona Community



Dr. Adam Clark
Associate Professor of
Theology, Xavier University



MISSION & OUTREACH

Our Daily Bread - Volunteers Needed for "Sandwich Squad"!

Jesus said, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Matthew 4:4 (New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition).

Our Daily Bread is Cincinnati's largest non-profit soup kitchen and social center located in the Over-the-Rhine neighborhood of downtown Cincinnati. Their mission is to provide stability and hope to guests in need by offering meals, hospitality and social services in a safe, respectful environment. In 2024, 199,842 meals were served with the help of volunteers posting 21,184 volunteer hours.

The social center serves as a community gathering place where guests are welcome to relax and socialize, earning the nickname "Cincinnati's living room." Guests are welcome to participate in various activities such as playing bingo or card games, enjoying a movie or simply having a safe place to rest. Other amenities open to the public include public restrooms, water-bottle filling station, free phone access for local calls, free Wi-Fi, chairs, couches, and mats for a resting place, outlets to charge phones/ devices and a bag check to keep their belongings safe. Birthdays are even celebrated with a take home treat bag.

In 2024, the soup kitchen served 199,842 meals and this year has seen record numbers, reaching 800+ meals a day on occasion. All food that is served is either rescued or donated. In addition to serving dine-in and carry-out hot meals Monday through Friday, sandwiches and snacks are provided to guests so that they may have something to eat later in the day. THIS IS WHERE YOU COME IN!



As many of you may recall, there once was a "sandwich squad" of dedicated volunteers from Westwood First who made sandwiches every Thursday to be delivered to Our Daily Bread during COVID and post-COVID times. Unfortunately, the need has only grown since that time so we thought we would like to rejuvenate our efforts to provide sandwiches once again. We will be seeking at least 10 volunteers to make 20 sandwiches each (or you can partner with someone and do 10 each). They are simple sandwiches of just bread and meat of your choice sealed in an individual plastic bag and labeled (no cheese on sandwiches due to allergy concerns, but may provide a pre-wrapped slice of cheese in the baggie, not on the sandwich). We are hoping this provides a volunteer opportunity for all since this can be done in the comforts of your own home. Our first sandwich donation date is **WEDNESDAY, MAY 21st**. All sandwiches would need to be delivered to church that morning between 8:00 am and 9:00 am (they need to be delivered to Our Daily Bread by 10:00 am). Arrangements can be made if you are unable to deliver at that exact hour). **A sign-up sheet with all the details will be in the parlor for all who are interested.** Future dates will be added throughout the year to give everyone the opportunity to participate. For any questions, contact Patti Grace: 513-290-6047 or email at edoubleug@aol.com.

In her hymn "Bread for the World," Bernadette Farrell wrote, "May we who eat/Be bread for others...." Amen.

MISSION & OUTREACH (CONT.)

Thank you, Volunteers! Adopt-a-Spot - Fourth Saturdays

Thanks to our March Adopt a Spot volunteers (not pictured Larry Tepe). Please consider joining us as we clean up our little corner of Westwood! **Our next two dates are April 26 and May 24, weather permitting.** Trash pickup supplies are furnished, and we meet in the church parking lot at 9:00 A.M. Questions, call Mary Beth Baverman (513) 678-2536.

About Adopt-A-Spot

Show your love for Westwood and help create a cleaner, more welcoming environment for residents, visitors, and local wildlife! Adopt-A-Spot was created by the City of Cincinnati's Keep Cincinnati Beautiful organization, with the goal of incentivizing groups across the city to clean and maintain an assigned public area. The program was revitalized last year upon a city budget increase. Our Mission & Outreach Committee has partnered with Westwood Civic Association to host monthly clean-up crews to go out into various areas of Westwood to clean up litter. Our designated area is the immediate block around Westwood First. Join us in keeping our neighborhood clean and welcoming for everyone!



East Westwood Grocery Update

In the aftermath of the January 15th food mart fire in East Westwood, the WFPC Mission & Outreach Committee has been working with Third Presbyterian Church and the East Westwood Community Council to help the residents of East Westwood most impacted by the fire.

One of the ideas brought forward was tap into the Healthy Harvest Mobile Market operated by the Freestore Foodbank. They have agreed to include East Westwood into their schedule and the mobile market will be appearing there May 19, June 30, and July 21. Exact times, locations, and need for any other volunteers is still being worked out.

This is a great win for East Westwood and a step in the right direction in addressing the food desert in the neighborhood! We'll keep you updated on any further developments.

WestFed Food Pantry Needs

May 2025

- **Cereal**
- **Crackers**
- **Canned Corn**

Please place your donations in the white bins located in the side Narthex.



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

2025 Rummage Sale

SATURDAY, JUNE 7 - 9:00AM - 2:00PM

When spring cleaning, be sure to collect items to donate for our annual Rummage Sale. Presbyterian Women collaborate with Scout Troop 1107 in putting on this event. Help us make it the best sale yet! Hopefully, you can store your items until the week of the sale. If you need your items picked up, contact Mary Beth Baverman (513) 678-2536 or Camille Rechel (513) 746-6485. Thanks, in advance, for your support!



Thank You! Flying Pig Marathon Fundraiser

Presbyterian Women thank all who helped us raise funds for our missions on Friday, April 25. There is still time to purchase raffle tickets for the Piggestraffleever. P.W. receives credit for all ticket sales - only \$5 each. Maybe YOU will have the winning ticket, and, if so, P.W. gets a matching prize! **Tickets must be purchased by May 3rd at 4:00 P.M.**

BUY RAFFLE TICKETS!



Another way to show your support for PW is to purchase raffle tickets for the Piggest Raffle Ever! PW will receive 100% of your raffle ticket purchase, and if yours is one of the winning tickets, our organization receives a matching cash prize. Enter by scanning the QR code to the left, or visit piggestraffleever.com, and select "Westwood 1st Presbyterian Church Women" as the charity.

May Circle Meetings:

Circle 1: Tues., April 14th at 7PM at Beth Richmond's home

Circle 6: Sat., May 24th at 9:30AM at Jeri Rathkamp's home - please bring a breakfast goody to share!



YOUTH & FAMILIES PROGRAMMING AT WFPC

This past Wednesday, WFPC's young adults and youth (+ organizers) met for a roundtable discussion and get-together to explore ways to become more connected! It was a great evening with lots of laughs and ideas. If you would like to join the exploration, contact Adam Hayden at 812.430.4464 or adam@wfpc.org

We are continuing to ask parents in/near/connected to Westwood to provide us feedback. **If you have young children, will you please take a moment to fill out this survey? If you know any parents that have young children, will you please pass along the survey to them?** To access the survey, simply go to <https://bit.ly/wwwparentsurvey> or scan the QR code on the right.

Thank you!

Adam Hayden, *Young Adult & Family Connector*



WFPC DEACONS REPORT

Volunteers needed for Sunday Greeters!

Westwood First Presbyterian Church is a warm, welcoming community, and there are so many ways we collectively communicate that deep sense of hospitality. For example, we all make a point of extending greetings to friends and visitors any time they enter our doors, and we LOVE that about our church! The Deacons want to add a small layer of intentionality and "you can't miss it" visibility to this practice. **We're hoping many of you will join us in forming a cadre of volunteers to serve as Sunday morning greeters, either at the Sanctuary door or the Koenig parking lot door.** Interested? Talk to Janice Kahsar, Dale Hedrick, Debbie Zorn or Phil Zorn, or call Janice (513-741-7608) to volunteer.

Thank you from the bottom of our hospitable hearts!

Your Deacons

Hospitality is contagious. Do you have ideas about how your Deacons can help facilitate our practice of hospitality in church and community? Let us know!



Birthdays

Rhonda Boddy	May 5
Mary Lou Bloom	May 6
Sandy Morris	May 11
Thelma Imhoff	May 12
Carl Draginoff	May 14
Scott Spilman	May 16
Candee Witterstaetter	May 17
Amy Hines	May 20
Ann Regan	May 21
Holly Wanek	May 22

Anniversaries

Robert & Donna Kimball	May 3
Steve & Wendy Beckman	May 14
Karl & Connie Graham	May 17

Sunday Sextons

May 4: Tony Upton
May 11: John Rathkamp
May 18: Andy Patton
May 25: David Ulrich

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

5/13 **Bealtaine: The Gaelic May Day Festival** Rev. Dr. Mary Laymon

6/3* **Sounding of the Heart: Sound & Voice Meditation** Rev. Rolf Billes

*May's 4th Tuesday Session is moved to the following week

SAVE THE DATES!

Kirking of the Tartans Service



Sunday, May 4th | 10:30AM

You won't want to miss our Celtic Celebration complete with bagpipes, drums, banners, and kilts. Wear some plaid and enjoy drinks, food, fellowship following the service at West Side Brewing!

Westwood School Teachers' Lunch



Thursday, May 8th | 10:00AM

Congregational Life Committee will be ordering sandwiches and wraps to serve to ~75 teachers and staff at Westwood School. They are looking for volunteers to purchase refreshments and supplies, as well as deliver/ help serve the lunch. Sign up sheet is located in the Narthex! Contact Linda Gardner for more information.

2025 Church Picnic!



Friday, August 22 | Fernbank Park

All are invited - More info to come!



MAY 2025 WESTWOOD FIRST BUILDING CALENDAR

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
27 Worship Service Concert Series 10:30am 2:30pm	28 Westwood Woman's Club Princesses Ballet Administration & Personnel Meeting Scout Troops & Cub Pack Meeting 11:30am 3:30pm 5:30pm 6:30pm	29 Little Village Princesses Ballet 9:30am 3:30pm	30 Little Village City Gospel Tutoring Princesses Ballet 9:30am 3pm 3:30pm	1 Little Village Princesses Ballet Chancel Choir Rehearsal 9:30am 3:30pm 7pm	2 Ping Pong Club Little Village Princesses Ballet 9:30am 9:30am 3:30pm	3 Princesses Ballet Little Village 8:30am 10am
4 Worship Service 10:30am	5 Communications Team Meeting Congregational Life Meeting Princesses Ballet Scout Troops & Cub Pack Meeting 10am 12pm 3:30pm 6:30pm	6 Little Village Princesses Ballet 9:30am 3:30pm	7 Little Village City Gospel Tutoring Princesses Ballet Stewardship & Operations Meeting Mission & Outreach Meeting 9:30am 3pm 3:30pm 5:30pm 6pm	8 Little Village Westwood School Teachers' Lunch Princesses Ballet Worship & Music Meeting Chancel Choir Rehearsal 9:30am 10am 3:30pm 6:15pm 7pm	9 Ping Pong Club Little Village Princesses Ballet 9:30am 9:30am 3:30pm	10 Princesses Ballet Little Village 8:30am 10am
11 Worship Service 10:30am	12 Princesses Ballet Scout Troops & Cub Pack Meeting Circle 1 Meeting 3:30pm 6:30pm 7pm	13 Little Village Princesses Ballet Westside Abbey 9:30am 3:30pm 6pm	14 Little Village City Gospel Tutoring Princesses Ballet Session Meeting Westwood Historical Society Meeting 9:30am 3pm 3:30pm 6:30pm 7pm	15 Little Village Chancel Bells Girl Scouts Princesses Ballet 9:30am 1:30pm 1:30pm 3:30pm	16 Ping Pong Club Little Village Westwood Women's Club Board M... Princesses Ballet 9:30am 9:30am 10am 3:30pm	17 Princesses Ballet Circle 6 Meeting Little Village Peanut Butter & Jam 8:30am 9:30am 10am 10:30am
18 Worship Service 10:30am	19 Princesses Ballet Scout Troops & Cub Pack Meeting 3:30pm 6:30pm	20 Little Village Fuller/Castle Wedding set up Princesses Ballet 9:30am 10am 3:30pm	21 Little Village Fuller/Castle Wedding set up City Gospel Tutoring Princesses Ballet 9:30am 10am 3pm 3:30pm	22 Little Village Fuller/Castle Wedding Rehearsal Princesses Ballet 9:30am 12pm 3:30pm	23 Ping Pong Club Little Village Fuller/Castle Wedding Princesses Ballet 9:30am 9:30am 2pm 3:30pm	24 Princesses Ballet Circle 6 Meeting Little Village 8:30am 9:30am 10am
25 Worship Service 10:30am	26 Princesses Ballet Scout Troops & Cub Pack Meeting 3:30pm 6:30pm	27 Little Village Princesses Ballet Westside Abbey 9:30am 3:30pm 6pm	28 Little Village Princesses Ballet 9:30am 3:30pm	29 Little Village Princesses Ballet Chancel Choir Rehearsal 9:30am 3:30pm 7pm	30 Ping Pong Club Little Village 9:30am 9:30am	31 Princesses Ballet Little Village 8:30am 10am



CLERK OF SESSION

Diane Heilmann

DEACONS

Phil Zorn
Debbie Zorn
Dale Hedrick
Janice Kahsar

STAFF MEMBERS

Rev. Dr. Rich Jones, *Pastor*

Amy Hines, *Interim Church
Administrator*

Heather MacPhail, *Director of
Music Ministries*

Andrew Wells, *Facilities
Manager*

Adam Hayden, *Young Adult &
Family Connector*

Noelle Scheper, *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

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

All visitors are welcome to worship with us Sunday at our Traditional Service at 10:30 a.m.

Church Day Number: 513-661-6846

Reverend Dr. Rich Jones, Pastor

Heather MacPhail, Organist/Director of Music Ministries

Amy Hines, Interim Church Administrator

Noelle Scheper, Church Administrative Assistant

Andrew Wells, Facilities Manager

Adam Hayden, Young Adult & Family Connector

ext. 106

ext. 105

ext. 104

ext. 101

ext. 250



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