

December 2024/January 2025

THE WARNER MEMO



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THE NEWSLETTER OF
WARNER MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

<https://warnermemorial.org/>
[Calendar](#)

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

Dear Warnerites,

On Sunday, November 24, we concluded our series on the story of the Exodus with the commencement speech of Joshua. Imploring the Israelites to consider the god they will serve, we, as individuals and as a congregation, are challenged to consider whom we will serve too. As we look toward our future, we could choose to devote ourselves to the god of success, the god of productivity, the god of self-determination, the god of 'growing the church'—surely these gods are popular among society. OR, we can choose the God of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love—the God of Life.

Joshua claims, “As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:15) and as the Warner Memorial Church, so do we. We will serve the God who provides for our need, the God who lovingly offers a path to goodness when we're wandering aimlessly, the God who forgives and reconciles, the God who lifts up the lowly and comforts the mourning, the God who liberates from all that oppresses, the God in whose image we are made, the God who loves us and blesses us and keeps us and will not let us go, the God who created and creates and is creating in and among us at all times, the God who mends the brokenness, the God who breaks the bonds of death—the God of Life.

The question we must reflect on next, however—is “How?” How will we live such that our devotion to God is made known? How might others in our community know that we choose to serve the God of Life, the God of all gods, the God of all creation? And, will they know that they can join us in choosing life over brokenness and death?

Advent is a season of endings and beginnings. As the calendar year comes to a close, a new church year begins. Christ's birth ushers us into new ways of living and loving; and yet, the world as we know it

spins on and on. In our spinning world, let us take time this season to ponder the ways the God of Life dwells in and among us. Let us take time to give thanks, to feel hope, to experience peace, to delight in joy and to revel in love. Let us take time to notice the light shining in the darkness. And, as we invite others to notice the light with us, may the light of Christ shine evermore brightly, evermore boldly, evermore brilliantly.

Peace be with you and those you love this season.

Peace, Pastor JC

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Update on the AC Process

On Monday, November 18, our slate of ruling elders were trained via Zoom by Rev. David Baer, the Stated Clerk of the National Capital Presbytery. The slate of elders will meet with the Administrative Commission on Sunday, December 8 @ 2:30pm to be formally examined (as is custom). Then, at 3pm, the congregation will vote to approve their election.

On Tuesday, November 19, the National Capital Presbytery approved the motion that "the Administrative Commission for Warner Memorial Presbyterian Church be DISMISSED with thanks, upon its anticipated action to return original jurisdiction to the session of the church on December 8, 2024."

The final report distributed to the Presbytery can be found by **clicking here**.

Dec 8 @ 3pm--Congregational Meeting & Worship Service Including Ordination and Installation of Officers

Mark your calendar to join us for a special celebration on Sunday, December 8, beginning at 3pm.

We will begin with a Congregational Meeting to elect ruling elders, deacons and Nominating Committee members. Then, the Administrative Commission of the National Capital Presbytery will meet in our presence, approving the examinations of our spiritual leaders and officially transferring governance into their hands pending their installation. Then, we will worship God, ordain and install leaders among us, and bear witness to God's steadfast and enduring love and faithfulness!

Spiritual Direction @ Warner

Hi Warner Memorial Presbyterian Church! I am Amy Molina-Moore. I've been worshipping with you for the past couple of weeks and have been grateful for the opportunity to pray and seek God in that sun filled sanctuary of yours. I am a Spiritual Director and an ordained clergy person (from the Episcopal tradition.) I have been a Spiritual Director for over a year and in that time I've imagined a physical space where people could unburden themselves, tell their story and encounter the God who loves them over and over again in both fresh and timeless ways. I have found that space at Warner Memorial. In the weeks to come with the blessing and encouragement of Pastor JC I will be cleaning up, rearranging and praying my way through the old counseling space on the third floor and intentionally shaping it to be a spiritual direction studio. In addition to offering spiritual direction to the wider community, I will be worshipping often with you all at Warner and supporting the ministry of Pastor JC. I look forward to getting to know you all better in the season to come. God's Peace! – Amy





Advent & Christmas Schedule



Advent I-- Dec 1	WORSHIP @ 11AM
Advent II-- Dec 8*	WORSHIP @ 3PM
Advent III-- Dec 15*	WORSHIP @ 11AM
Advent IV-- Dec 22	WORSHIP @ 11AM
Christmas Eve--Dec 24*	WORSHIP @ 5PM
Sunday, Dec 29	WORSHIP @ 11AM



On **December 8**, join us to celebrate the Second Sunday of Advent AND the ordination and installation of officers. A special time of fellowship will follow.

On **December 15**, join us to celebrate the third Sunday of Advent with a special presentation of music.

On **Christmas Eve**, join us for a special service of Lessons and Carols, candlelight and an interactive telling of the Christmas Story. It will be meaningful and fun for all ages!



Come, let us worship God!



Special Music Sunday - December 15th - 2 Events!

Our special music service is at 11am and features the Sanctuary and Bell Choirs. "Kneeling in Bethlehem" is a suite of carols for chorus and congregation featuring the poetry of Ann Weems. Then at 1:00pm, after the service and fellowship hour, you can enjoy a visit with our beloved long-time music director John Horman, who will present "Sing Your Way To Christmas", an interactive journey through his books of Christmas Carols and the stories surrounding them. Here's what John has to say about the day:

Sing Your Way to Christmas

For over 50 years I have been a strong advocate for group singing as a way for people to enjoy music together and appreciate both our common humanity and colorful diversity. As our country has diversified, it has been increasingly difficult to find songs which everyone knows. In today's world "community song" is most easily found in the songs sung to celebrate the Christmas holiday season. Whether sacred Christmas carols or simple holiday songs about Santa and snowmen, these songs are a source of delight and religious celebration. I also have become aware over the years that if we know something about the "when", "who" and "why" a song was created, we sing it with more intensity and deeper understanding. For example: Knowing that the lyrics to "Winter Wonderland" were written by a young man suffering from Tuberculosis, confined inside for most his life and unable to enjoy the outdoor beauty and fun of the winter season, makes the lyrics come alive with new poignancy.

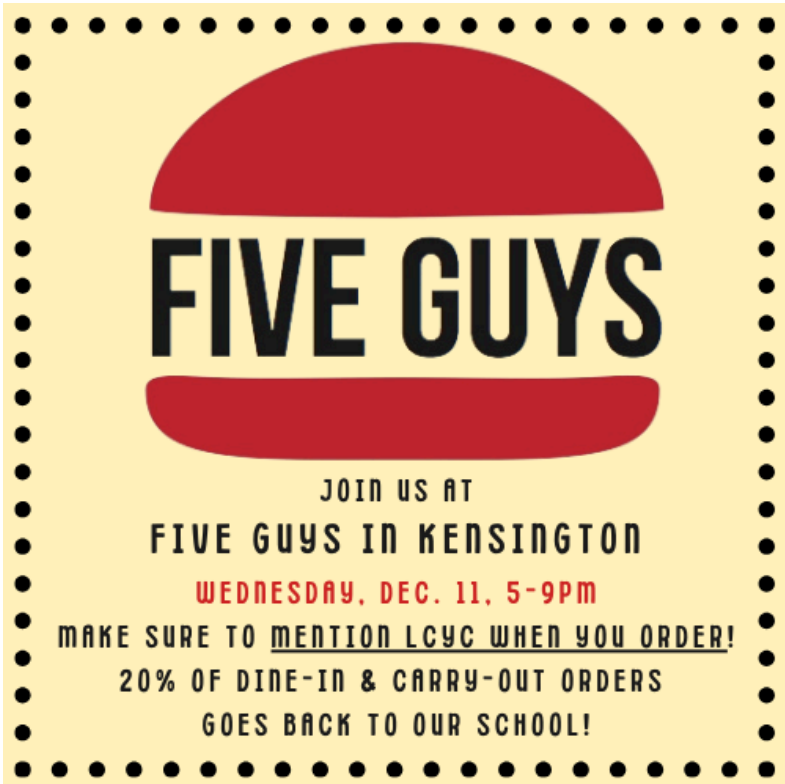
During the pandemic, when I was, like everyone else, stuck inside my house, I decided to research the origins of sacred and secular holiday songs. This resulted in two books: Sing Your Way to Christmas, Vol. I and Sing Your Way to Christmas, Vol. II . Combined, these two books contain over 50 familiar and unfamiliar Christmas songs and carols. Included are background stories for each song and carol as well as the

music when possible. The presentation will be a 1 hour program of songs and carols included in the book, with a handout which includes materials from both volumes. I will also have copies of both books available if people wish to purchase them or they may buy them on Amazon.

We hope to see you in church for "Kneeling In Bethlehem" and "Sing Your Way To Christmas!"

~ Peter Smeallie, Music Director

Support LCYC and Enjoy Five Guys for Dinner!



Press Pause

Join Rev. JC and fellow Warnerites for Bible Study each Wednesday at noon on Zoom. The Zoom ID for all meetings is 717 127 0266 and the passcode is 10123.

THANK YOU

Dear Warner friends,

I am so grateful to have been part of the life of Warner Memorial for the past two years. You have opened your hearts to me and my family and have helped me grow into the pastoral role. You provided me with constructive criticism for my preaching (which is much appreciated) and opportunities to grow in pastoral care. I leave you with new confidence in my ministry and the knowledge of how a truly hospitable congregation welcomes all.

Thank you for your very kind parting words in the many cards I received. The stole you gave me is beautiful and is the third one from Warner. Each reminds me of your generosity and your faith in me as a church leader. The plaque is lovely and a reminder on my desk of my time with you. And of course, Warner would not be Warner if there wasn't a beautiful reception. You really do know how to feed people and celebrate! I am so grateful to you.

You have helped to shape my ministry and you are in heart and in my prayers. I will be reaching out to you soon for your expertise in Earth Care. Gaithersburg wants to go solar and needs help! I told them I know some people... I will see you on Dec. 8th to celebrate Warner's new beginning.

I have been blessed by you!

In Christ,

Kris Obom Maldarelli, CRE

Tree Decorating

Many thanks to the crew of Warnerites who poofed and decorated the chancel tree, under the always tasteful eye of Sheri Daugherty!

June and Mark Eakin, Marc-Henri Winter, Susan Middleswarth and Andrew D'Souza, Susan Bresee, Barbara Shaw, Ginny Atwood, and, of course, David Daugherty all supported the annual tradition.



Photos by Mark Eakin



BUILDING & GROUNDS UPDATES

We have had several plumbing issues taken care of: the plumber snaked the floor drain in the boys' bathroom, June Eakin and Susan Kline fixed the dripping faucet in the boiler room and the drinking fountain in the social hall that was not draining. Susan also changed the astronomical clock and the thermostats after the clocks changed, and replaced batteries in the fire alarm box in the boiler room. Thanks to Steve Dunn for completing concrete repairs on the steps by the church office entrance.

~ Susan Kline

COMMISSION TO THE COMMUNITY

Christmas Joy Special Offering

Honoring and Celebrating Church Leaders: Past, Present and Future

This Advent Season, Warner will participate in our denomination's Christmas Joy Offering. By helping us support church leaders who have and continue to point us to God, the Christmas Joy Offering celebrates God's perfect gift to us. The offering honors retired pastors, church workers and their families, as well as emerging leaders who are pursuing their education at Presbyterian-supported schools and universities.

The Board of Pensions will receive and distribute fifty percent of the offering received. In 2023, income supplements helped nearly 275 retired church workers and surviving spouses provide for themselves. Housing supplements helped more than 218 recipients remain in their homes, afford assisted living, or receive long-term care. Emergency Assistance Grants helped more than 215 recipients facing great financial need or uncertainty due to unforeseen circumstances. The support the Christmas Joy Offering provides is vital to church workers who are facing financial challenges.

The remaining fifty percent will be used to enhance education and leadership development skills at three Presbyterian-related educational institutions: the Manual School in Albuquerque, NM, the Presbyterian Pan American School in Kingsville, TX, and Stillman College in Tuscaloosa, AL. All of these institutions are equipping communities of color, and many of the students at these institutions are the first in their families to enroll in higher education.

Please give generously to the Christmas Joy Offering. Donations can be made using the envelopes in the sanctuary, through our online donation platform (click down and select “o8”) or by mailing a check, marked Christmas Joy Offering, to the church.



CHRISTMAS JOY SPECIAL OFFERINGS

LEADERSHIP: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

Two Letters from Jed and Jenny Koball

Commission to the Community invites you to read Jed’s monthly letter from November, titled Weaving the Way Forward. Visit:

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/letter/weaving-the-way-forward/>

Their annual Christmas letter is also included below for your reading pleasure.

~ Nancy Recchia and Ruth Harvey

***The people walking in darkness have seen a great light;
On those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.
Isaiah 9:2***

Dear friends,

Not long ago a famous Peruvian priest and theologian, Gustavo Gutierrez, passed away after 98 years of life. He was known in ecumenical circles as a prophet of the poor who led with humility, curiosity, courage and grace. Among his many oft cited words are the following:

*To hope does not mean to know the future,
but rather to be open, in an attitude of
spiritual childhood, to accepting it as a gift.*

He, like so many of the Peruvian people we are privileged to walk with, have known deep pain, suffering and struggle in their lives. They know the uncertainty of each day, each moment. They know that nothing is guaranteed. And yet...

They walk with arms wide open, in anticipation of the gift of life that awaits them – not because they know what is up ahead but because they know that the gift of life is worth waiting for.



Such life is known in the encounters with those we love and those eager to share such love. As we reflect on this past year, despite the challenges, the struggles, the defeats, the uncertainties, the fears, we have also known such life through such encounter with our partners, with one another, and with you!

For the many ways you walk with us – whether you prayed with us from afar or embraced us in person with a hug – you remind us of the promise of God’s light that shines in the darkness. You make us wake up in the morning with childlike joy and expectation that everything is going to be better.

For your immense generosity, prayerful accompaniment, and courageous service we thank you! And we wish you a very, merry Christmas!

In the Spirit we share,

Jed, Jenny, and Thiago

DEACONS UPDATES

Rainbow Place Dinners - 12/14 and 1/11

We are delivering dinner to the Rainbow Place women's shelter on the second Saturday of each month, through March 2025. The next dates are December 14 and January 11. We would like 2 volunteers for each category to provide servings for 10 to 12 people. The food should be brought to the church kitchen downstairs by 5 PM that Saturday, in disposable containers. To sign up please go to the [Sign Up Genius](#) or to the Church Office. Rainbow Place is grateful for our legacy of delicious meals.



Rainbow Place

Save the Date - Comedy Club Outing January 24th

We are organizing a group outing to Give a Hoot Comedy Club in Rockville to benefit Rainbow Place on the evening of Friday, January 24. Look for more details to come soon and join in for a night of laughter and fellowship along with money for Rainbow Place. Contact Marc-Henri Winter for more info. From Rainbow Place: "Here's what we are so excited about. Give a Hoot is celebrating its second anniversary that weekend and has chosen Rainbow Place to be the beneficiary of the weekend's proceeds. We sold out our 2 shows last January and now they've added a Thursday night performance. Plus, we've seen comic Helene Angel and she is hysterical!"

College Care Packages Delivered

We sent college care packages to four of our collegiate members, bolstering them for finals week with treats and messages of encouragement.

~ June Eakin

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Presbyterian Women's Carols & Cookies gathering will be Tuesday, December 10th at 7:00pm at the home of Lisa Smeallie. Bring a platter of cookies to share and join our festive tradition of fellowship and singing. Contact June Eakin or another member of Joy Circle if you'd like a ride.

Gift ideas – We still have copies of the WMPC cookbook, *Feed the Body Nourish the Soul*, for \$10 and Tim Cook Christmas cards 10/\$5. If you'd like to purchase any, contact Lisa Smeallie, June Eakin or the church office.

Joy Circle – Tuesday 7:00 pm, January 14 on Zoom; Lesson 4 of “Let Justice Roll Down.” If you're willing to lead the discussion or have questions, contact Kay Gorman or June Eakin.

PW Book Club – On January 24th beginning at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom, we'll discuss *True Biz* a novel by Sara Novic. “This is a story of sign language and lip-reading, disability and civil rights, isolation and injustice, first love and loss, and, above all, great persistence, daring, and joy. Absorbing and assured, idiosyncratic and relatable, this is an unforgettable journey into the Deaf community and a universal celebration of human connection.”- Goodreads.com



Join the discussion whether you read the book, or not!

Save-the-Date for the NCP Presbyterian Women Prayer Gathering on Saturday morning January 18th on Zoom. Watch for more details to come.

~ June Eakin

FINANCIAL UPDATE

The Administration and Finance Commission has worked with the other commissions to prepare a draft budget for 2025. It has been forwarded to the Administrative Commission for approval so that the new Warner Session will have this spending plan in hand as they begin work in 2025.

Someone recently asked if they can still donate to Warner using a check. Of course you can! To make a gift to Warner, you can send a check to the church made out to WMPC, donate online at <https://warnermemorial.org/giving/>, use the QR code, or Text-to-Give at 301-822-2580. We can even take other forms of giving such as negotiable stocks or you can use a donor advised fund.



Below is a high-level view of the church’s operating income and expenses compared to the budget, as of October 31, 2024.

	October 2024	YTD 2024	YTD 2024 Budget	% of YTD Budget
Pledge Income	\$19,802	\$183,842	\$197,363	93%
Total Income	\$22,740	\$268,090	\$284,926	94%
Total Expenses	\$41,145	\$355,337	\$357,854	99%
Difference	\$18,405	\$87,247	\$72,928	120%

Total Assets: \$817,676; Total Liabilities: \$75,358 (AC loan), \$51,368 (borrowed from LCYC)

In November, \$60,000 was transferred to LCYC to cover borrowing through October.

Working with the Commission Chairs and Pastor JC, the Administration and Finance Commission prepared a proposed budget for 2025 (see next page). This was approved by the Administrative Commission in November and will help the newly constituted Session in 2025. Please note that we continue to spend more than our receipts. As a result, we anticipate selling up to \$112,000 of our investments to cover costs in 2025.

Warner Memorial Presbyterian Church 2025 Budget	
Income	
3001 - Pledges	\$197,722
3020 - New and Non Pledges	\$36,791
3025 - Facility Use	\$28,546
3032 - Per Capita Collection	\$1,395
3033 - Contributions from LCYC	\$21,748
3090 - General Interest Income	\$22,000
3070 - Investment Funds Contribution *	\$112,048
3071 - Miscellaneous	\$2,980
Total Income	\$423,229
Expense	
4000 - Personnel Expenses	\$220,638
4100 - Christian Education	\$275
4200 - Worship and Music	\$2,200
4300 - Outreach and Fellowship	\$500
4400 - Community/Benevolences	\$26,000
4500 - Buildings & Grounds	\$86,965
4600 - Administration & Finance	\$86,651
Total Expense	\$423,229
Net Income	\$0

*We currently anticipate selling approximately \$112,000 of our investments in 2025 to cover this shortfall.

~ Mark Eakin, Elder and Chair of Administration and Finance Commission



December

January

Scott Bunn
Ty Bragg
Finn Cadwallader
Leigh Cook
Tim Cook
Varsha Datta
Sheri Daugherty
Mark Eakin
Laura Kline
Calvin McGlade
Susan Middleswarth
Sungho Paik
Andrei Pinkus
Donald Stalker

Max Carroll
Ben Cope
Virander Datta
John Morris
Camern Pinkus
Babs Sausser
Kyle Smeallie
Usha Soni
Janet Tennent
Holly Trout

WARNER WELCOMING STATEMENT

All people are of sacred worth and God loves everyone without exception. We welcome all people into our worship, fellowship, membership, and leadership. Believers, seekers, and doubters are all welcome at Warner. We are an affirming and supportive spiritual community that celebrates God's infinite love, wisdom, and grace through worship, music, education, mission, and fellowship. Though we are all unique, we are united in loving and praising God and in loving each other. We are committed to communing together in such a way that we give witness to Christ's sacrificial life, redeeming death, and glorious resurrection. Loved and accepted by God, our congregation offers love and acceptance to all.

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Office Manager: Trevor Wind

Director, Learning Center for Young Children: Elizabeth Zanetti

Children's Program Aide: Shervonne Johnson

Technical Director: Peter Brown

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CHANGE SERVICE
REQUESTED