

Advent 2025

THE WARNER MEMO

WARNER MEMORIAL
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
10123 CONNECTICUT AVE, KENSINGTON

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

FAMILY FRIENDLY
CANDLELIGHT
5:00PM

Every Body is Welcome

THE NEWSLETTER OF
WARNER MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

<https://warnermemorial.org/>

[Calendar](#)

Pondering of a Pastor in the Missional Incubator

Dear Warnerites,

If you were in church on Sunday, November 16, then some of this letter will sound familiar to you—but, I find repetition is helpful to develop understanding and hopefully you will too!

As part of the Missional Incubator process, we have access to important data from *MissionInsite*, which is a research tool that helps us learn more about who our proximate neighbors are, what their needs are, and what their religious beliefs and experiences are. It includes demographic data—ages and races, income brackets, family status, etc. It also includes data collected by the *American Belief Study* which helps us—the church—understand what is important to people in our neighborhood and what their relationship to religious life has been, as well as what their hopes are for the future. It's fascinating information.

This study tells us that the number one concern for people who live here in Kensington—the thing that ranks highest in keeping people up at night and causes stress on them, is (unsurprisingly) finances. They're worried about making enough money to pay their bills, to send their kids to school, to save for retirement. Secondly, they are keenly aware of the social and political environment and they are worried about what the future will bring. And on top of all this, they live in human bodies which need care—mental and physical health is also a top priority as they strive to find direction in their lives, reaching goals and “being successful.” **These are the top three concerns for our closest neighbors—finances, uncertainty about the future, and coping with physical and mental illness and disease.** None of this information comes as a shock to me—in fact, I see myself squarely included in it, though I, of course, was not a respondent to the survey.

As far as our neighbors view of church or religious life, the top three reasons why our neighbors are not active in a religious community include: 1. They don't feel a meaningful spiritual connection to the church. 2. They believe religious people are too judgemental. And 3. They don't trust organized religion. For those who had grown up in a church, they left because they didn't feel welcome—they felt judged harshly and excluded by cliques within the church. But, if they were to consider engaging in a church community again, **they are looking for warm and friendly encounters, opportunities to develop personal relationships and adult social activities.** Now, that being said, data was collected over several years and it tells us that people are entrenched in their habits when it comes to church. Meaning, if you go to church, you go. If you don't go to church, you don't. Essentially—there are people in the church and there are people outside of the church. There is not a population of people looking for the right church to find their spiritual home.

Our neighbors, those with whom our church is in close proximity, their lived experience of church participation is fundamentally different from the experience of those of us inside the church today. Now, we could spend the rest of our life as a congregation wringing our hands and asking why this is, pondering ways we could bring back all those lost youth, and contemplating what we could do to capture their imagination of new converts. But, instead of doing that, why don't we find ourselves inspired by our spiritual ancestors who experienced the presence of the Holy Spirit on that day of Pentecost?

Acts 2 reminds us that passers-by from all over the world felt a sense of belonging, a sense of comfort, a sense of community when they heard their own language being spoken that day in Jerusalem. We, as a church, can do some work to learn the language of our neighbors—think about new and different ways we can address their needs. If we want them to understand that they are loved and cared

for; If we want them to know that they are not alone, that there is a community that believes in their belonging, and they need not fear—we need to speak their language. Let’s think creatively about how we might create a space for warm and friendly encounters, opportunities to develop personal relationships, and adult social activities.

What if we transformed the upstairs into a shuffleboard speakeasy? What if we set up leagues for people to play and get to know each other? What if the narthex were transformed into a cozy coffee shop and the back portion of the sanctuary into kid-play space? What if we created opportunities to meet our neighbors on their terms? What if we create collisions among our neighbors—a place for them to meet and connect—wherein relationships might grow and well-being will increase? What if through different interactions, our neighbors discover the light and love of God along the way? What if... What if... What if...

The Session and I are in prayer this season for the Spirit to move among us in extraordinary ways. Please join us in this prayer and may we, too, discover wondrous ways God will make love known!

Peace, JC

Holy and wondrous God, move your Spirit among us and the community around us. Catch our attention, like a leaf upon the breeze, and carry our imaginations to new and exciting places wherein we might connect meaningfully with those around us. Inspire us, your church, and sustain us as we heed your call to love you and love our neighbor. Through Christ we pray. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



ADVENT & CHRISTMAS EVE

NOV 30	ADVENT I
DEC 7	ADVENT II
DEC 14	ADVENT III - CHOIR-LED WORSHIP
DEC 21	ADVENT IV
DEC 24	CHRISTMAS EVE @ 5:00PM

Invite your neighbors, friends, and family to an intergenerational service of lessons & carols and candlelight on Christmas Eve!

Congregational Meeting - Sunday December 14

The Session of the Warner Memorial Presbyterian Church has called a meeting of the congregation to be held on Sunday, December 14, following worship, for the purpose of electing officers. There will also be a meeting of the Corporation to elect Trustees.

Staff Transition

Shervonne Johnson, our dedicated Sunday School Director, shared with us back in the fall that she will be leaving to focus her energy on her health and passions related to her professional career. Her last Sunday will be December 14. We will celebrate her ministry among us during fellowship following worship and the congregational meeting on that Sunday.

Special Music - Sunday December 14

The Warner Sanctuary Choir will present special music in celebration of Christmas on Sunday, December 14 at the 11:00 service. Please join us for “Light of Peace: Celtic Carols for Christmas” - a suite of five charming originals based on Celtic themes by Karen Morrolli. The choir will be accompanied by a lively group of musicians, including:

Chris Kim, piano

Scott Camillo, violin

Arjun Virk-Burnell, flute

Adam Augusteijn, bodhran

From the composer: “These anthems come from what originally was a full Celtic service of Lessons and Carols, entitled *Light Of Peace*. The idea was to weave together familiar hymn and carol tunes from the Irish and Scottish traditions with popular Celtic folk tunes, reels, and airs. I also wanted to create new texts that suggested that our proper response to the Christmas story might be to live out a life of love in action. For example, in response to the humble birthplace of Christ, and the shepherds - not the loftiest of characters - being the first to hear the song of the angels, the choir sings this prayer to the tune of *Sally Gardens*: ‘Forgive us, Lord, forgive us when we look to the rich and strong instead of the lowly stable for the power to right Earth’s wrongs. O use us, the poor and lowly, inspired by the song from above, to seek the lost and broken, to heal the world with love.’”

The choir has really enjoyed delving into this style of music and learning a large chunk of new material. We hope you can join us in person or on Zoom to enjoy the fruits of their work!

~ Peter Smeallie, Music Director

Press Pause Bible Study - Wednesdays at Noon

Fill your hungry spirit with good things! Take time over lunch in the middle of the week to gather with Warnerites on Zoom to connect and reflect on the scriptures.

Book Club

PW Book Club – On December 5 th on Zoom at 7:00, we'll talk about Mozart's *Starling* by Lyanda Lynn Haupt. Then on January 23th beginning at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom, we'll discuss *Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow: a Novel* by Gabrielle Zevin. Join the discussion whether you read the book, or not!

For all Zoom meetings - click the [Non-Worship Meeting Link](#) and enter password 10123.

Carols and Cookies - Tuesday December 9

The Presbyterian Women are hosting their annual Cookies & Carols on Tuesday evening December 9th at 7:00 pm at the home of Lisa Smeallie. Bring cookies to share, your singing heart and gay apparel! For more details contact Lisa.

Rainbow Place Dinners - Volunteers

We are delivering dinner to the Rainbow Place women's shelter on the second Saturday of each month, through March 2026. Our next date for the year is on December 13. We would like 1 volunteer for each category of food to provide 10 to 12 servings each. The food should be brought in disposable containers to the church kitchen downstairs by 5 PM that Saturday. To sign up please reach out to the Church Office, or use the [link](#). Rainbow Place is grateful for our legacy of delicious meals.



Rainbow Place Shelter

A home for tonight and hope for tomorrow

Sanctuary Advent Preparations

After MANY years of captaining our sanctuary Advent decorations, Sheri and David Daugherty retired. A mighty band took up the mantle this Sunday after worship, setting up a smaller tree that will still brighten our spirits and help us prepare for Christmas. Thanks to all who help make our church a beautiful and welcoming place in this season, and all seasons!



BUILDING & GROUNDS UPDATES

Work accomplished in October and November:

- The required sprinkler head box has been installed by the fire alarm boxes in the boiler room. Thanks to June Eakin for acquiring it and the contents, and to Steve Dunn for installing it.
- We have decided we will remove the dossal cloth when we get the chancel wall painted. TBD.
- The Narthex doors look fabulous now. Thank you, Don Stalker, for all your hard work on them.



- We checked the batteries and programming for the heating thermostats.
- We reattached the fallen ceiling tile in room 26.
- We fixed the Washington St stairwell door closer on the top floor and adjusted the closet on the main floor by the LCYC stairs so that the door would close.
- Thanks to Mark Eakin, who replaced the electrical outlet in the CE office by the desk with a 3-prong outlet.
- We replaced the batteries in the water sensor in the social hall closet sensor (2 AAA) and in the base (4AA).

- We contracted with a mason, who fixed the Connecticut Ave exterior steps where the brick had fallen off, and replaced a missing brick and some missing grout under the ledge of the north retaining-wall of the patio.



- We resolved a partition issue in the girls' bathroom. One of the new partition doors was getting caught on the door latch, so the installer came and adjusted the posts.
- We have signed new contracts for snow removal (>3") on the parking lot and sidewalks with the same contractors as last year. **If you would like to join our snow shoveling crew and experience meaningful exercise and good company, please contact Susan Kline. It would also give you a sense of accomplishing a job well done, and save the church money.**
- We have had some issues with the door key-pads not working. June replaced the battery for the phone system in the boiler room and reset the system, which should fix the problems.
- *Saia Plumbing* fixed flushing issues on the middle toilet in the ladies' bathroom and the room 4 toilet + the left urinal in the boys' bathroom. We think this was partially caused by a WSSC issue - no water pressure briefly on Sunday 11/16.
- We put an electric heater in the narthex and the bottom of the choir loft stairway since the hot water heat has been disconnected there.

- Marc-Henri Winter, Chelsea Cook, Pastor JC and Susan Kline braved the attic and replaced 3 sanctuary lightbulbs on 11/23.



Projects still to be done this year:

- Find a new HVAC contractor since *CroppMetcalf*e notified us they can no longer service our equipment due to personnel changes. Susan has met with 2 contractors.
- Trevor has been working on getting 3 key rings with our new interior door keys ready for the fire department to put in the Knox box attached to the exterior wall at our Connecticut Ave entrance. We need to finish this work since Trevor's last day was November 30.
- Continue to look at old tech at the church, and dispose of it appropriately.
- Inspect all the heating convectors for changes due to possible leaks. **We need help! Contact Susan Kline if you can help with this project.**
- FOM will prep and paint the area at the bottom of the choir loft stairwell.
- FOM will touch up the ground floor bathroom walls as needed now that the new partitions have been installed.

~ Susan Kline

COMMISSION TO THE COMMUNITY

Christmas Joy Offering - November 30-December 21

This PCUSA Special Offering supports “leadership of the past, present, and future.”

How this Special Offering is used:

50% of donations to this Special Offering support the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions, which provides financial assistance to current and retired church workers and their families in their time of need. Here are some facts about the help provided to these families because of this offering:

- \$1.1 million of gifts from the 2024 Offering are being used to provide critical financial support and grants for current and retired Presbyterian church workers in their times of need.
- Income supplements from the Board of Pensions helped nearly 261 individual recipients, assisting retired church workers and surviving spouses with the means to provide for themselves.
- Housing supplements from the BOP helped more than 1,366 individual recipients remain in their homes, afford assisted living, or long-term care.
- Emergency Assistance Grants from the BOP helped more than 199 individual recipients facing times of great financial need or uncertainty due to unforeseen circumstances.

The other 50% of the collection supports these Presbyterian-related schools, equipping students with education and leadership development as they grow in their faith: Menaul School, Albuquerque, NM, Presbyterian Pan American School, Kingsville, TX, Stillman College, Tuscaloosa, AL.

In the materials for this Special Offering, there are testimonials of the great support provided during time of need in 2024, and here is an excerpt from one of them:

“Although I’ve given to the Christmas Joy Offering for years, I never thought I would be a recipient. It brings tears to my eyes every time I think about the generosity and immediate support of the Board of Pensions in the early days of Hurricane Helene.” Rev. Lynn Bledsoe, Retired pastoral visitor, Montreat Presbyterian Church, NC

Throughout this season of Advent, as we take up this collection, we are reminded of the message in Isaiah 40, to “Prepare the way of the Lord.”

There are special envelopes available in the sanctuary to enclose cash or checks, and an option to donate to this offering online.

~ Sharon Allen

Recent News from the Commission to the Community (CtC)

Here are highlights from recent actions of the Commission to the Community.

Housing for Hurricane Victims

In September, about 17 members or friends of Warner went for a week of home reconstruction near Asheville, NC. They worked on 4 homes that had been battered by Hurricane Helene, hanging drywall, plumbing pipes, building decks, and so forth, as reported earlier. Warner’s monetary contribution was over \$3945 (but hard to quantify, because not everyone reported all their contributions) plus \$500 as a thank-you acknowledgment sent to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. Thank you, those who went, those who donated, and those who contributed both prayers and cookies.

Peacemaking and Global Witness

The annual (and final) offering for Peacemaking and Global Witness collected \$570. This was divided into two portions. One portion went to the local and national Presbyterian Church (USA) for various

projects. The other portion went to The Family Tree, an organization centered in Baltimore, dedicated to helping stressed families learn peaceful and effective ways to deal with domestic conflicts. Thank you to those who contributed.

Food for Local Needs

Because of rising food prices, coupled with the temporary lack of income by many federal employees and partial cancellation of some government services, especially SNAP, the number of people needing emergency food assistance rose this fall. This was felt by food banks around the country, including MUM (Mid-County United Ministries), a food bank with long ties to Warner. Accordingly, the Commission to the Community sent \$1193 to MUM for direct purchase of food and supplies.



At the same time Warner supported the November food drive of Kensington Park Senior Living. Other members of the Warner community, including LCYC, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo Church, and the Indonesian American Presbyterian Church, joined us in

contributing to this food drive. At the time of this writing, 36 bags of food had been collected and added to the KPSL truckload for MUM. The photos here show only a portion - our barrel was filled 3 times! Thank you to all who contributed food, or who through your monetary support throughout the year supplied the funds for CtC's budget.

A Second Family in Haiti

In 2024 we contributed to the [Beyond Borders Family Graduation Program](#), a program that encourages extremely poor families in Haiti to become self-sufficient. We were so pleased with the results of our first sponsorship that we recently sent \$2400 to Beyond Borders to sponsor a member of the newest cohort as it starts out.

Thank you for all your contributions to Warner, which enable the Commission to the Community to take actions such as those described above.

~ Cory Atwood

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP TEAM

Gift shopping? For many, an abundance of stuff can feel like a heavy weight. *Try a clutter-free gift for anyone and everyone this year.* Some ideas to consider:

- Memberships: children's museum, state or national parks, art museum
- Classes: music, dance, cooking, home brewing, internet, kids gymnastics
- Experiences: concert/theater tickets, daddy-daughter date, adventure park
- Time: babysit for a date night, yard work, prepare a meal, coffee & conversation
- Consumables: fruit basket, coffee shop gift card, local foods

Practicing Hope in the face of climate change

Feeling helpless or maybe even hopeless? There's just one more scary situation after another coming our way. Therapists have a word for this feeling, "Climate Anxiety" and there's help out there for it. Here are a few ways to get started on healing and claiming hope.

- Find hope in Christ's teachings: Read the down-to-earth book *Our Angry Eden, Faith & Hope on a Hotter, Harsher Planet* by Presbyterian pastor David Williams. "With an unflinching gaze and a blunt pen, [he] spells out how we will be morally tested on this harsher, hotter planet we have made for ourselves. Find the hope that transcends time and the faith that rises to meet our unforgiving reality."
- Connect with others: I subscribe to Minimum Viable Planet, Sarah Lazarovic's weekly-ish un-depressing climate newsletter.
- Reach out to share your experience with others: contact a friend or network with a group such as Presbyterians for Earth Care (presbyearthcare.org) or NCP Earth Care Network.
- Spend time in Creation: As you wander, find a comfortable spot to sit and take a few minutes in silence, paying attention to your breath as your body rests in stillness. When you are ready, take notice of the creation around you with: 5 things you can see, 4 things you can touch, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell, 1 thing you can taste. From Marissa Selgado, Creation Justice Ministries.



Used by permission Sarah Lazarovic

Remember that you are a sibling in the family of God. Pray, meditate, rest, do what you can, with what you have, where you are. “Knowing what must be done does away with fear.” - Rosa Parks

“In times of hardship, the hope that rises from faith is deeply, powerfully adaptive. It’s perhaps the most important gift we receive from following Jesus, and it is the most significant contribution of faith as humanity endures and overcomes.” – Rev. David Williams

~ June Eakin

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Below is a high-level view of the church’s operating income and expenses compared to the budget, as of October 31, 2025.

	October 2025	YTD 2025	YTD 2025 Budget	% of YTD Budget
Pledge Income	\$7,707	\$179,477	\$164,768	109%
Total Income	\$22,446	\$299,571	\$259,551	115%
Total Expenses	\$30,681	\$352,184	\$352,691	100%
Difference	\$8,235	\$52,613	\$52,846	

Total Assets: \$747,084; Total Liabilities: \$69,377 (AC loan), \$33,185 (borrowed from LCYC).

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



December

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

January

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.

Warner Memorial Presbyterian Church

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Home Page: <https://warnermemorial.org/>

Warner Memorial Presbyterian Church Staff

Pastor: Reverend J.C. Cadwallader

Music Director: Peter Smeallie

Musician: Chris Kim

Director, Learning Center for Young Children: Elizabeth Zannetti

Children's Program Aide: Shervonne Johnson

Technical Director: Peter Brown

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MEMO
Published monthly by the
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CHANGE SERVICE
REQUESTED