



January

WEST HEMPFIELD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Hello to all the newsletter readers of West Hempfield Presbyterian Church!

As we plan for 2025, we reflect on 2024.

2024 has been a good year for the WHPC.

Many difficult decisions were made in 2023, and we had to live out those decisions in 2024, which did bring some challenges. However, that hard work has already begun to show the signs of new life and budding fruit.

While we know church attendance trends here at WHPC and across the nation have been going down for decades, in 2024 we saw an upturn—not massive, but noticeable both in the feel on Sunday mornings and in our records. Average weekly attendance in 2022 had been 37, for 2023 it was 43, and for 2024 it has been 46.

Also of note, only one withdrawal from church savings was made in 2024, and thanks to a generous donor unknowingly giving at the same time, we were able to transfer the money right back into our savings one month later and still meet all of our financial commitments. Meaning, we met our goal of keeping expenses in line with our income for the year.

Additionally, thanks to generous donations and fundraising, we completed our AC Fund project by collecting (outside the budget) funds equivalent to the cost of the sanctuary AC units, effectively paying ourselves back for that 2023 purchase.

One more thing I'd like to celebrate from 2024 is a grant the church received—for reusable physical supplies for Outreach events (defined by the grant as church events that are for/invite the community). We have been able to purchase new

signs, banners, and personalized table coverings to promote the church at events. We were able to buy new technology such as a computer, webcam, and a Cricut machine with a wide variety of attachments and supplies that have been used to create gifts and crafts, cutting costs for VBS, Sunday School, and more. We were even able to create a mobile digital sign, currently in the lobby, that could go anywhere—from playing videos for Bible lessons at VBS to advertising church events at the Car Cruise.

The last two years, and particularly 2024, have shown WHPC's faithfulness and God's blessings in the midst of challenging times.

We've adapted and made changes, while holding firmly to the things that matter most. We have been faithful and generous stewards of our resources and preached the Good News of God's Love in Jesus Christ through our words and actions.

2025 is bound to bring its own challenges, and we will meet them with (to highlight a Presbyterian phrase from our ordination liturgy) "*energy, intelligence, imagination, and love*" and with God by our side. We will hold fast to what is true and remain open to adapting and trying new things where needed and appropriate.

Blessings, Rev. Andrew Wirt



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WORSHIP



JANUARY

Worship Schedule

1/5 - 10AM Worship w/ Communion (9AM Sunday School)	1/19 - 10AM Worship (9AM Sunday School)
1/12 - 10AM Worship (9AM Sunday School)	1/26 - 10AM Worship (9AM Sunday School) Congregational Meeting and Lunch after worship

DO YOU HAVE LEFTOVER CHRISTMAS COOKIES?



Are you willing to share?
Worship Committee is inviting members to bring in cookies for Fellowship Time after our first worship service of 2025 on Sunday, January 5, 2025.
Don't have leftover cookies?
Come help the rest of us enjoy ours!

STEWARDSHIP

WHPC no longer passes the offering plate through the pews during worship services. We still have a time of honoring and blessing our gifts and offerings in each service and the plates are available before and after worship at the primary entrance to the sanctuary, by the bulletins.

The Stewardship and Finance Committee also no longer distributes personal, numbered, and dated giving envelopes. To avoid waste and decrease costs, we stopped this practice several years ago. However, boxes of envelopes are still available for those who make cash donations and can be found in the lobby at the Welcome Center and near building entrances. **You will need to write your name on the envelope if you do not wish for your gift to be anonymous.** These envelopes are also not dated, so if you still have some in your box from last year, there is no need to throw them away.

If you give by check, you are certainly welcome to use the provided envelopes, but you do not need to use one. You can simply put your check in the offering plate or mail it to the church.

You can also **donate directly through your bank**, and **online offering** continues to be available on the church website or by texting WHPC to 73256 (you will not receive any marketing as a result of using this service). **You can set up a one time gift or automatic, recurring donations through the online offering.**

We will continue to provide you with periodic giving statements. The deacons, coat drive, and other special envelopes will still be available in the pews or near the offering plate throughout the year.

Thank you for your continuing support of WHPC!

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

WHPC's Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 26, 2025 (after 10AM worship service) with a snow date of February 2, 2025.

We will present the 2025 budget as approved by the Session at their November meeting and the 2024 Annual Report. Those present will vote to reaffirm the pastor's contract, set the pastor's 2025 compensation, and elect the new class of church leadership.

When the Annual Report is ready (at least one week before the meeting) we will send it out as a PDF through the Constant Contact email lists "All WHPC News" and "Special Event News". If you are not currently signed up, you can do so on the church website westhempfieldpc.org/subscribe

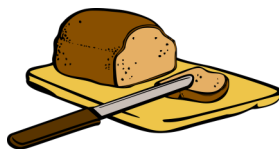
Print copies will also be available in the lobby of the church Sunday, January 19. If you pick up a physical copy at the church to take home, please bring it back for the meeting to help reduce the number of copies we need to print.

FELLOWSHIP LUNCH

After the congregational meeting on Sunday, January 26, we will head downstairs to enjoy lunch and fellowship together!

Please help us prepare enough food for everyone by signing up in the lobby or contact the church office.

If you can help with setup on Saturday, January 25, talk with Larry and/or Mary Esther DeTesta.



DECEMBER SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

The Session of West Hempfield Presbyterian Church met on December 22, 2024

We gathered to cover our church, congregation, and community with prayer and review all that has been going on with the church and the world.

- Approved Session minutes from November meeting
- Set the communion schedule for 2025
- Reviewed reports from WHPC staff and committees
- Celebrated that the Deacons donated to round up the PDA Hurricane Relief gift from the church to \$1,000
- Reviewed and Updated our rental policy
- Reviewed calendar of upcoming rentals and events
- Closed with prayer

Next scheduled meeting will be January 28, 2025

Reminder: As we start the new year, it's time to get annual reports to the office.

Please have your annual *GROUP OR COMMITTEE REPORTS* emailed to the office *NO LATER THAN JANUARY 13, 2025*



WINTER WEATHER UPDATES

Decisions about winter weather cancellation of worship will be made the day of the service (so as not to be premature, weather and conditions can change quickly).

No matter what, everyone please be careful! Even if you don't hear that the service is cancelled, if it looks messy where you are, stay home and stay safe.

If we need to cancel because of bad roads or ice at the church, a message will be sent out one hour before the start of worship using the new text message service and Constant Contact email service.

The system that we used to use to make automated mass phone calls is no longer in use by the church. (It was too expensive for its limited usage.)

If you know someone who might not be reached by those services, give them a call. I am sure they will appreciate the check in.

WINTER WEATHER RESPONSE TEAM

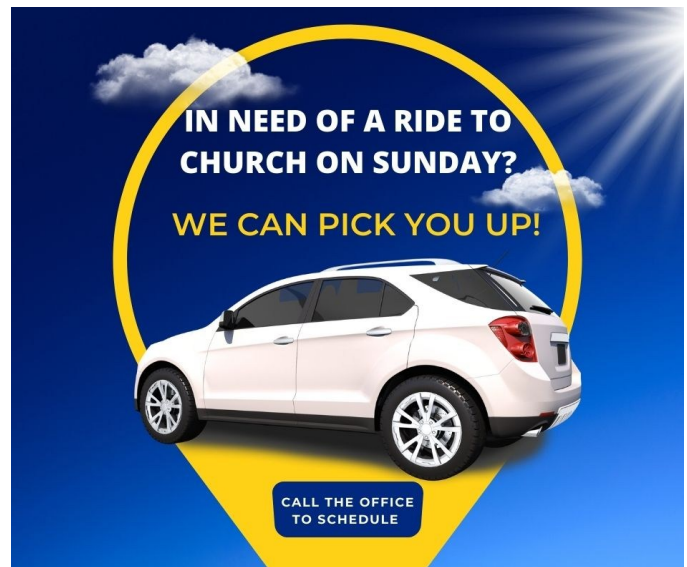
WHPC is putting together a team of volunteers to help clear the church sidewalks of snow and ice on Sunday mornings in the event of winter weather.

A sign up sheet is on the Welcome Center table in the lobby if you would like to be put on the call list of possible volunteers.

If you have any questions, talk with Elder Rick Forsyth.

DEACONS OFFER A RIDE

If anyone would like to come to church, but is in need of a ride, please contact the church office to let us know. There are several deacons who are willing to help.



HOMEBOUND AND NURSING HOME FRIENDS

We encourage you to remember those who can't be with us physically with a card or phone call.

The winters are long, especially for them.





On behalf of the Deacons and Mission committee....a great big thank you to everyone who donated food and gifts to this year's Deacon's Baskets and Angel Tree. It is heartwarming to see the outpouring of food items and gifts for struggling families in our community.

An additional thank you to those who came and helped sort food, pack the boxes, and help with the distribution.

Thank you WHPC family and friends!

Thank you to everyone who joined us for Christmas Eve service!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Thank you to our Christian Ed. Committee for the awesome Sunday School Christmas party for our students.

Thank you to all who bought poinsettias to help decorate the church for Christmas. You made everything look so beautiful!

Thank you to everyone who volunteered to read and light Advent candles. This made our Advent and Christmas Eve services so special!

Thank you to everyone for the cards and prayers and to PWA for the lap blanket.
~ Debby Eckrich ~

★ HAPPY ★ BIRTHDAY!

Cheryl Bookheimer	January 2	Keith Pritts	January 16
Marcus Dawson	January 2	Donald Stewart	January 18
Richard Hazlett	January 4	Joseph Smith	January 20
Jon Grinder	January 6	Randy Greenawalt	January 20
Neil Graham	January 10	Marge Jackson	January 21
Leah Iwinski	January 14	Bob MacIntosh	January 22

*If you have a January birthday, and we've missed you –
PLEASE, let the office know!*

Deacons Baskets

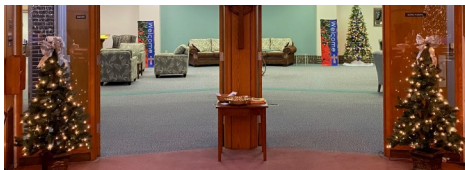
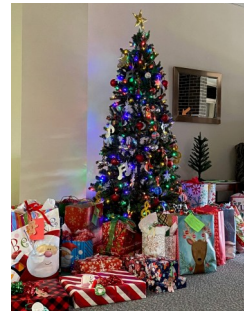


MERRY CHRISTMAS

AND

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Gingerbread Tree



CHURCH COMMUNICATIONS

The church sends out an email prayer list* each Tuesday; a weekly newsletter email each Friday (*the monthly newsletter chopped up into four parts*); occasional special event news, youth news, and committee reminders. Are you on the list?

The church also sends "broadcast style text messages" about twice per month to everyone who signs up.

Visit westhempfieldpc.org/subscribe to sign up or to make any changes.

**Anyone can submit a prayer request by contacting the church office. However, please respect privacy and do not submit requests for others without their permission.*



January 2025



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Office Closed Happy New Year! 	2	3 <i>FH-Rental</i>	4 <i>FH-Birthday Party</i>
5 9am Sunday School 10am Worship	6 <i>FH-Dartball</i> <i>Upstairs Rental</i>	7 <i>FH-Rental</i>	8 Senior Cards 11am <i>FH-Rental</i>	9	10 <i>FH-Rental</i>	11 <i>FH-Rental</i>
12 9am Sunday School 10am Worship <i>Upstairs Rental</i>	13 <i>Upstairs Rental</i>	14 Deacons Meeting <i>FH-Rental</i>	15 Senior Cards 11am <i>FH-Rental</i>	16	17 <i>FH-Rental</i>	18 <i>FH-Rental</i>
19 9am Sunday School 10am Worship	20 <i>FH-Dartball</i>	21 Stewardship Mtg <i>FH-Rental</i>	22 Senior Cards 11am <i>FH-Rental</i>	23	24 <i>FH-Rental</i>	25 <i>FH-Rental</i>
26 9am Sunday School 10am Worship Congregational Mtg	27 <i>Upstairs Rental</i>	28 Session Meeting <i>FH-Rental</i>	29 Senior Cards 11am <i>FH-Rental</i>	30	31 <i>FH-Rental</i>	