

THE WESTMINSTER
WORLD

MARCH
2025



During the
*Season
of Lent*
contemplate
your heart and
look at our
world with
Hope.

Artwork: Mary Judine Bruch, BVM

Lent

“Lent is the 40-day period (excluding Sundays) that begins on Ash Wednesday (March 5) and ends on Holy Saturday (April 19). Traditionally it is a season of reflection and preparation for Easter, and it commemorates Jesus’ 40 days of fasting in the desert.”

(UCC website)

Let us use this time learning to be more like Jesus – showing kindness, patience, gentleness and faithfulness in all our interactions with others.

And may we all experience grace and forgiveness,
and extend grace and forgiveness.

There are many resources available to help you focus on a Lenten practice such as “40 Acts” whose slogan is *Do Lent Generously*. They offer a daily reflection and a generosity challenge.





What a joyful way to banish the February blahs!

On February 10th, our Westminster family welcomed a new little one. We give God thanks for the blessed and safe arrival of baby Iris.



THANK YOU. THANK YOU.



I want to thank the CARING COOKS and friends who provided meals for me since Feb. 7, when I came out of the hospital. I'm doing very well and I feel that I will now be able to look after myself. So thank you again, and many of God's blessings to all of you.

BARB Auchterlonie



CELEBRATION TIME!

Happy March Birthdays to Christopher S, Analicia C, Mona T. and Ian F.



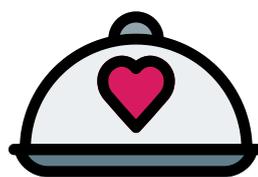
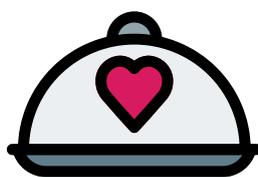
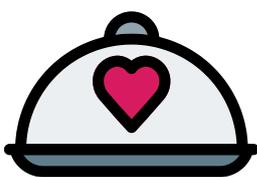
VALENTINE'S DAY

One afternoon, back in July 2024, an amazing group of volunteers got together to outline the possibility of hosting a Valentine's Day Dinner. Discussions began around the where (Heydenshore, a hotel or convention centre, Westminster); the what (a gala, a buffet, a luncheon, a sit-down meal with drinks/cocktails); the when (keeping in mind that Valentine's Day 2025 was on a Friday, but also in the middle of winter); the who (outside or stay within our Community); and the why (social evening, fundraiser – go big or “go home”).

And as you know, that possibility became a reality with our fabulous Valentine's Dinner on Friday, February 14th, 2025. Of course, this required lots of monthly then weekly team meetings, lots of planning, budgeting, delegating, contacting, donation requests, posters and tickets printed, a motion or two to Council, advertising, and probably the most arduous - sampling and approving the menu items.

The best part for me was having the privilege to work alongside the most diligent, respectful, FUN, industrious, creative and engaged group of Westminster volunteers – from our group of planners to our students, servers and bartender, from our cooks to our clean-up crew, and from our staff to our ticket sellers, to name a few.

However, the most important thing for me was getting your 'buy-in' on this, our first ever type of event like this at our church, in our gym, AND in our sanctuary! Your support of donations to the Silent Auction, purchasing tickets, your kind words of encouragement, and mostly just coming to enjoy and participate in the evening meant so much – that, well, maybe, just maybe, there might be a second celebration somewhere down the line in 2026??!???





Of course, this would mean LOTS OF OPPORTUNITIES for you to volunteer to serve our Community of Faith!! We do look forward to having you share your skills and knowledge, your ideas and expertise in helping to plan another such event. The only criteria: sharing and caring!! Do feel free to contact me if you are inclined to participate in this one-off event.

Again, in case I haven't said it enough, THANK YOU. THANK YOU. THANK YOU!! At the time of writing, we still had not tabulated all the numbers, however, we hope to share that exciting news with you in the next 2 weeks.

Margaret Suepaul



Setting up in the Sanctuary



Decorations



Photo Booth in the Gym



Table Decoration



Appetizer





Planning Meeting

Westminster draft plan 2025 - 2027
March 30, 2025

You are invited to attend a meeting **after service on March 30, 2025** to learn more about the Westminster draft plan 2025 - 2027 and to provide your input and support.

Please attend and let us know your thoughts. Coffee, tea, juice and muffins/scones will be served. We anticipate the meeting being about 1 hour in length.

To prepare for this meeting, here are some thoughts on Lent:

Rather than a time of “giving up” things, can we start to take on new things during Lent?

Lent is a time to make changes in our lives, sometimes by giving something up and also by looking to renew our faith. How do we renew our faith – by practising prayer, using a devotion or joining a bible study and also through good works or deeds. Consider what you can do for your church, your community, your faith as we move into Lent.

Consider that as far as good works or deeds are concerned – no work or deed is small.

Please join us for this meeting. Please register online (via the e-blast) or call the office.

OR **Register** at this Link: <https://forms.gle/Z9uo7eD1LAcsbXTH7>



CNOY 2025 **Westminster Walks for The Refuge**
Wow! Westminster United Church raised \$7685.50,
and surpassed the goal by 384%



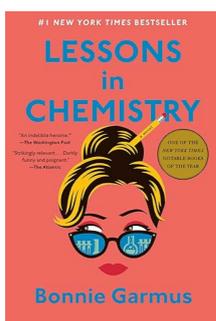
This year the “CNOY Oshawa Sector” had 726 walkers, 104 volunteers and 70 teams. Westminster had 28 registered walkers and was the 5th highest fundraising team out of 70!

Both the 2K and 5K walks were held on Saturday, February 22, 2025 with a 5:00 pm send-off. It was quite cold, windy and a bit challenging trudging through the deep snow. The cause made it worthwhile, not to mention the delicious chilli afterwards.

With the support of our Westminster community, we helped The Refuge reach its goal of \$150,000. They ended the evening raising \$179,284, which is 119% of their goal. Such an amazing accomplishment.

Approximately 500 young people walked through The Refuge doors in 2024, and sadly, this number increases every year. The Refuge offers help to the homeless, hurting and hungry youth in our community. Not only do they provide meals, showers, laundry services, and much needed kindness and support, but best of all, The Refuge shares THE WORD OF GOD!

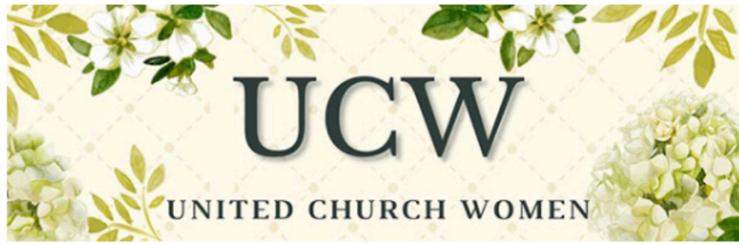
Thank you all for your support, donations and prayers. All your help goes a long way and makes such a difference in the lives of those who need it most.



Book Club

Westminster’s Book Club meets this month on Wednesday, March 26th to discuss ***Lessons in Chemistry***.

Check the Friday e-blasts for further details.



This month's UCW (United Church of Canada Women's Group) meeting will be **Monday, March 3rd, at 2:00pm via Zoom**. We very much look forward to meeting and sharing the word of the Lord with you. New members are always welcome.

Our guest speaker this month is the multi-talented Dr. Ben Stein, our Minister of Music, who will be showing us his rather unique instrument collection and sharing some of his musical journey.

If you would like to join this Zoom meeting and are not currently receiving UCW meeting information, please contact Tena Darroch at jd7123@rogers.com.

We are thrilled to announce that our **April UCW meeting will be back in person on Monday, April 7th at 2:00pm in the Founders' Room**. Our guest speaker in April will be Elaine Torgyik, who runs the Tai Chi group that meets in our church each week.

We look forward to seeing you again for this exciting workshop.



Opening to Spring with Gentle Yoga and Mindfulness



The Wellness Committee invites you to join us for a 6-week session of gentle yoga, led by Romain Pereira, in the Founders' Room. The classes will run from **Tuesday, March 25 to Tuesday, April 29, from 5:00 - 6:15 pm**. The cost is \$60. This fee will be donated to Westminster to help fund a new AED (Automated Emergency Defibrillator).

Classes will include a variety of postures, movement, stretching and breath work. This session is perfect for beginners as the emphasis will be on cultivating a yoga practice to meet your own unique needs. There will be a sign-up sheet available in the Narthex. Enrolment is limited to ten participants.

Watch the upcoming e-blasts for registration and further details.



“Easter Memorials”

Easter is a time to remember our friends and family who have passed on. At Westminster, we honour them with Memorial Donations that are acknowledged in the Easter Sunday e-mail blast and the monthly Westminster World newsletter. This year, we would also like to include photos of your loved ones that keep them forever in our hearts.

Funds raised are used to purchase beautiful spring flowers to decorate the sanctuary on Easter Sunday. Following the service, these flowers are then distributed to members and friends in need of some cheering up as they may be ill, in hospital or long-term care; have been experiencing difficult times; or recently lost a loved one. The list of recipients is compiled by the Ministry and Office staff, the Wellness Committee and the Friendly

Visitors. Any remaining flowers will be delivered to someone who is newly identified and needs remembering. If you know of someone who would appreciate a gift of flowers, please notify the church office, preferably by e-mail at wuc@westminster-uc.ca or if necessary, by phone.

Memorials (new process)

The memorial listing must be sent to Olivia Wild at oliviawild@gmail.com

In the **Subject** line type: **EASTER MEMORIALS**

In the message, include the name(s) of the donors along with who you are remembering.

If you would like to include a photo with your memorial, please attach a copy to this document.

Donations will be received now until April 13.

Via e-transfer to wuc@westminster-uc.ca

Make security question = “EASTER” (please use all caps)

Make security answer = “MEMORIALS” (please use all caps)

Please also include the following in the message line: “for Easter Memorials”

Via cheque or cash

Place your cheque or cash donation in an envelope, and either drop off at the church office or place in the offering plate during Sunday Service.

Please indicate “**Easter Memorials**” and your name on the envelope (both are important!)

Any memorial funds remaining from the purchase of flowers will go to Westminster’s Local Fund. The full amount of your donation will be included on your 2025 tax receipt.

(continued ...)



If you are able to *assist with the delivery of flowers* on Sunday, April 20, or if you would like more information, please contact **Crystal Smith** at crystal.a.smith55@gmail.com.

Receiving the potted plants at Easter brings heartfelt joy and blessings to the recipients, reminding them that they are part of our family.

Please consider donating today.

With thanks from The Wellness Committee



Thoughts about Lent...

Giving up Chocolate? Coffee? T.V.? Social media? for Lent this year?

Consider instead doing volunteer work, taking on a 40-day (Sundays off!) project, donating the value of an unnecessary purchase to charity, starting a new health regime ...

Pray, Praise, Ponder

God of Love,
as in Jesus Christ you gave yourself to us,
so may we give ourselves to you,
living according to your holy will.
Keep our feet firmly in the way where Christ leads us;
help our lips speak the truth that Christ teaches us;
fill our bodies with the life that is Christ within us.
In his holy name we pray.

Amen
(VU 110)