

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Do Justice • Love Kindness • Walk Humbly



December 13, 2017



Friends and fellow disciples,

We're almost there.

In the midst of all the crazy planning and events, all of the pieces we have to juggle, I think we can finally see the finish line. This past Sunday helped me. Gifted musicians under Monica's expert direction led us in the morning. Dozens upon dozens of joyous children – with great support from parents, pageant directors, and Heather – told the familiar story in the evening. Thank you all so much!

In the chaos of the activity, as well as the confusion of our world, I think I am beginning to see the faint outlines of the words of the prophet Isaiah:

² The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has shined.

³ You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder.

⁴ For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.

⁵ For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

⁶ For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

We'll build toward the day even more this Sunday, as the handbells lead us. Then we'll be in the final stretch, and we'll hop in cars and carol, enjoying each other and spreading cheer to those who need it. And soon it will be Christmas Eve, on a Sunday this year, the rhythm of worship building through the day.

It's a busy season, in a complicated age. And it becomes all the more important, in the midst of division and grief, poverty and anger, that we pray for the hope of that Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. My prayer for the world, and for each of you, is that Christ Jesus carves out just a little space for us to move toward each other as family. In our community – and even more in all the things that divide us from one another – may Christ reach across to bind us in love.

Blessings on this final leg of your Advent journey,

Chris

In this Issue

Concerns & Celebrations	2
2017 Christmas Eve Offering	2
2018 All Church Retreat	3
Blue Christmas Service	3
Christmas Caroling for All Ages	3
Christmas Eve Worship Services	3
Countering Pharaoh Elective	4
3rd Graders to Receive Bibles	4
Aperture: Third Wednesdays	4
Spring Women's Retreat	4
Advent Serving and Learning	4
Wednesday Dinner in 2018	5
From Haiti Outreach Ministries	5
Haiti Holiday Get-Together Party	5
Westminster School for Children	5
Youth Ministry News	6
Dec. 17 Congregational Meeting	6
2018 Men's Basketball	6
Church Finance Overview	7
Elizabeth's Last Day: Dec. 21	7
Making Your Estimate of Giving	7
Gifts of Stock to WPC	7
Year-End Contributions	7
Preaching Schedule	8
Worship Volunteers	8

Please Note:

We will have only **ONE** morning worship service at 11am on Sundays, December 24 and December 31. If you are a regular attendee of the 8:30am service, mark this change on your calendar.

Please also note that Church School will **not** be held on December 24 and December 31. Godly Play will take place on December 24, but not December 31. The nursery will be available on both Sundays.

The choir, open to anyone age 12 and up who would like to sing on December 31, will rehearse at 10am in the Music Room.



Westminster Presbyterian Church is affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Concerns & Celebrations

Please remember the following in your prayers this week.

Donna Douglass
Sherry Fonvielle's daughter
Taylor Lewis Guthrie Hartman's mother
Amy Humphreys

Judy Lamon's friend
Dawn Lamont's mother
Chip & Cathy Reinhardt's daughter-in-law; Chip's mother
Barb Vanden Broek

Volunteer Opportunities *and more*

2017 Westminster Christmas Eve Offering

At Westminster, we have a tradition of giving generously to the Christmas Eve offering. This year's offering will be split between CASA and Urban Ministries of Durham. The offering will be collected at both Christmas Eve services. You can give any time before Christmas Eve in these ways:

- Drop a check off to the church office
- Give online at www.bit.ly/wpcG-CEveO
- Text "WPCDURHAM \$50.00" to 73256 (adjust donation amount as needed; standard text messaging rates may apply)

Open your heart and give generously as you come into Christ's presence this Christmas.



URBAN MINISTRIES
OF DURHAM



Homeless people typically arrive at **Urban Ministries of Durham's** shelter carrying everything they own. There's a big problem: There is only room inside the UMD dorms for one day's change of clothes and personal items. Other than, essentially, an outdoor shed, there's no place to store other items, often the most personal and precious possessions a person was able to grab before losing their housing. Your donations to the Christmas Eve offering will help build a new set of client storage lockers at UMD where these belongings can be stored and protected during a person's stay, with the individual having their own key to a private locker. This will increase dignity and allow a person to build on their resources to work toward ending their homelessness.

CASA's mission is to develop and manage affordable housing, providing opportunities for successful living. In July 2017, CASA purchased two neighboring apartment buildings in Durham's rapidly developing Lakewood area. The Maplewood and Underwood Apartments offer 79 one-bedroom units to people living on modest incomes. CASA's housing model ensures that even as property values soar in the surrounding community, these homes will remain affordable to seniors, veterans, people living with disabilities, and working families earning a low wage.

In addition to securing their affordability, CASA's ownership means tenants will benefit from compassionate property management including routine and 24-hour emergency maintenance and an on-site office. The purchase of these apartments brings CASA's total number of Durham homes to 135.

Built in the 1980s, the Maplewood and Underwood apartments need interior and exterior maintenance to improve the quality of life for renters, and to upgrade the community's curb appeal for the surrounding neighborhood. Funds raised by the Christmas Eve offering will support the renovation of

CASA's Maplewood and Underwood apartments, immediately going to work replacing cabinets, carpet, flooring, and appliances, and painting interiors. CASA believes that the solution to homelessness is housing. Thank you for being part of the solution!

2018 All Church Retreat: For the Beauty of the Earth

Friday, February 9 at 5:30pm to Sunday, February 11 at 12pm | Montreat Conference Center

Westminster's intergenerational All Church Retreat is a time for fellowship, fun, quiet, play, and growing together. This year, we'll explore the theme, "For the Beauty of the Earth." What better place than Montreat to experience the holy in God's amazing creation! There will be time for hiking and exploring Black Mountain on Saturday afternoon, and we'll have a BBQ dinner Saturday evening, followed by square dancing. The retreat will finish with a casual worship service on Sunday morning. Childcare will be available for age 4 and under during our program and worship time.

Retreat Cost (includes Saturday dinner) Family: \$80; Single: \$35

Lodging Cost Please provide your lodging preference when you register; the planning team will assign rooms and email you your remaining balance. **Due to limited availability, rooms will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis.** Cost below is for two nights' lodging.

- Assembly Inn
 - One room (1 Queen bed) with private bathroom: \$160 (3 available)
 - One room (2 Twin beds) with private bathroom: \$160 (17 available)
 - Two rooms (1 Queen bed, 2 Twin beds) with adjoining bathroom: \$320 (7 available)
 - Room share: \$80
- Private homes are available for rent around Montreat if you want to get together with a few people/families.



Food Cost Meals at Assembly Inn offer a great variety for everyone. Saturday dinner is included in the cost of the retreat. You **MUST** sign up for the meal plan (Saturday breakfast, lunch; Sunday breakfast) if you stay at Assembly Inn. Cost: Adult (12 and older) - \$27; Child (age 5-11) - \$13; Child 4 and under - free.

Registration Please register at www.bit.ly/myWPCevent or complete a registration form from the lobby by Sunday, January 7. Refunds cannot be made after January 7.

Questions Retreat questions: Carol Mansfield (carol.anne.mansfield@gmail.com); Lodging & Financial aid questions: Heather Ferguson (heather@wpcdurham.org); Online registration questions: Kara Pearce (kara@wpcdurham.org)

Community Blue Christmas Service

Tuesday, December 19, at 6:30pm
St. Paul's Lutheran Church

There will be a Blue Christmas service, especially designed for those who are grieving during this holiday season, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church at 6:30pm on Tuesday, December 19. This is an ecumenical effort by St. Luke's Episcopal, Epworth United Methodist, Pilgrim United Church of Christ, Westminster Presbyterian, and others. All who seek a service to acknowledge their grief are welcome.

Christmas Caroling for All Ages

Wednesday, December 20 | Meet in WPC Parking Lot at 6:15pm

Be part of the Westminster tradition of Christmas caroling at the homes of some of the beloved members of our community. Carolers will return to Westminster afterward for warm drinks and snacks in the Parlor. All are welcome!

Christmas Eve Worship Services

Westminster will offer one morning worship service at 11am and two evening worship services on Christmas Eve Day:

1. Family Service of Readings and Carols at 5pm
2. Service of Readings, Carols, and Lights with the Chancel Choir and Brass Ensemble at 8pm. Preludes for this service will begin at 7:30pm.

We hope you will join us on Sunday, December 24, for the final part of the Advent journey! Childcare is available for age 5 and under in the nursery during the 11am and 5pm services only.



Christian Education news

Adult Church School Elective: Term 3

Countering Pharaoh's Production-Consumption Society Today

Sundays, January 7 – February 11, at 9:45-10:45am in Room 204
Facilitator: Chris Tuttle

This 6-week elective confronts participants with the comparison of the enslavement of the Hebrew people in Egypt to the enslavement of Americans struggling with the unending demands of the consumer society that defines us.

A tour-de-force with preacher-professor-prophet Walter Brueggemann, Countering Pharaoh brings insights to the story of the Exodus that transforms it into a demanding call on the lives of 21st century people of faith. "It is a journey from slavery to covenant that we keep making over and over again... [because] Pharaoh has immense power always to draw us back into slavery," says Brueggemann.

WARNING: This program may be hazardous to your church, society, and the American way of life, and could potentially help restore the meaning of covenant.



Third Graders to Receive Bibles

Sunday, January 7 | 8:30 & 11:00 worship services

One important way that we pass along the foundational stories in our tradition is through the Bible. In worship, Church School, Godly Play, we•form kids, and youth programs, we surround our children with the journeys of those who have gone before us in order that they might see God moving in their own lives.

There are several milestones in the lives of our children that Westminster celebrates to give them a sense of belonging and connectedness. In worship on Sunday, January 7, we will give our third graders personalized Bibles. By this age, they are able to understand more fully the stories they have heard in church. They're beginning to ask questions about creation, about the unfairness that they see or experience in the world, and about issues of life and death. What better time to equip them with the Word of God and continue to expand their forming faith.



Aperture: Third Wednesdays

Professor Jodi Magness on January 17
"Ossuaries and the Burials of Jesus and James"
6:30-8pm | Music Room

Our guest speaker for Aperture: Third Wednesdays in January is UNC-Chapel Hill Professor Jodi Magness, Kenan Distinguished Professor for Teaching Excellence in Early Judaism.

In 2002, an ossuary inscribed "James son of Joseph brother of Jesus" surfaced in the hands of a private collector. A few years later, a Discovery Channel documentary and related book claimed that the tomb of Jesus and his family has been found in Jerusalem. In this slide-illustrated lecture, we examine the validity of these sensational claims in light of archaeological and historical evidence for ancient Jewish tombs and burial customs in Jerusalem, including the burials of Jesus and his brother James.



Dinner will be served from 5:45-6:15pm in the Fellowship Hall. Please sign up for dinner at www.bit.ly/myWPCEvent by Monday, January 15.

Save the Date: Spring Women's Retreat

The 2018 Spring Women's Retreat will be March 9-11 in Wrightsville Beach. Pastor and spiritual leader Cate Church Norman will lead us on the topic of "The Gift of Sisterhood." Registration begins in mid-January.

Advent Serving and Learning Elective

Return Food Pantry Donations by December 20

Our Advent Serving and Learning Elective has been a wonderful opportunity to learn about needs in our community. We've welcomed guests from North Carolina Central University's Food Pantry and the Society of St. Andrew. This Sunday, December 17, our guest speaker is from TROSA, which helps substance abusers recover by providing comprehensive treatment, work-based vocational training, education, and continuing care. Join us in the Parlor at 9:45am!

Thank you to all who have made donations to NC Central's Food Pantry through this elective. If you have a brown paper grocery bag for donations, please fill and return it to the collection bins in the Mission Center lobby by Wednesday, December 20.

— Wednesday Dinner in 2018 —

A team of elders, deacons, and staff are in the process of evaluating the Wednesday Dinner model, and have decided to **discontinue Wednesday Dinner on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays** beginning in January 2018.

Wednesday Dinner will still be available on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays, when we come together for WOW: First Wednesdays and Aperture: Third Wednesdays.

Our next Wednesday Dinner will be on Wednesday, January 17, before Aperture with Professor Jodi Magness (see page 4). There is no WOW: First Wednesdays in January.

Many thanks to the many hands who have put on Wednesday Dinner for the past two years. We appreciate your help with set-up, clean-up, cooking, and everything else that is involved! This list is an attempt to name our amazing volunteers, for whom we are so incredibly grateful. As memories fade over the course of two years, we may have inadvertently missed someone; please contact us if your name is missing (jafeiler@yahoo.com).

<u>Culinary</u> <u>Committee/Cooks</u>	<u>Set-up</u>	<u>Clean-up*</u>
Thelma Allen	Scouts of Troop 451	Chris Bean
Jean Cox	Titus Allen	Hannah Criswell
Helen Harrison	Marge Enberg	Mark Donoway
Jennifer Feiler	Bill McAvoy	Susan Landis
Bob & Dawn Lamont	David Potter	The Mangums
Ashley Messick	Susan Rohde	Neil McElroy
Page Page	The Tranthams	Jon Meredith
Marsha Scouten	Tom & Harrison Truscott	Lori Rosemond
Crystal Stickwood	Brendan Turner	Sara Pottenger
Anne Vann		Holly Schmidt
Carol Walker		Darren Skeen
		Lucy Stokes
		Pat Trost

**And lots of people who pitched in along the way!*

From Haiti Outreach Ministries

In this season of gratitude, we at Haiti Outreach Ministries would like to say thank you for your support of our ministry over the past year. Your generosity, encouragement, and prayers along with God's grace have made possible many wonderful achievements.

You have helped make it possible for us to provide places of worship for over 3,300 people a week; education for over 1,600 students; new outfits for our kindergarten and elementary school children; medical services for 30,000 patient visits a year; and over half a million gallons of clean drinking water for the communities we serve in 2017.

Please accept our most humble thanks for your support and generosity. We look forward to continuing our relationship.

- Pastor Leon, Jacky, Nadege, and all of Haiti Outreach Ministries

Haiti Holiday Get-Together Party

Thursday, December 28

7pm at 3924 Wentworth Dr, Durham

Westminster will travel to Haiti for an Education Mission Trip April 14-April 21. We'll work directly with students in the classrooms of Haiti Outreach Ministries' Menelas/Repatriot Elementary School. We'll focus on hands-on learning in science, math, art, and music with age 4 through 2nd grade.



"Tell me, I forget. Show me, I remember.
Involve me, I understand."

We need a 12-member team comprised of educators, students, helpers, and people who care! We will learn and train together in preparation for the trip.

Come learn how you can support the Haiti Education trip at the Haiti Holiday Get-Together Party on Wednesday, December 28. There will be desserts and prizes, so bring a friend and join us!

RSVP by Wednesday, December 20, to Dorene Palermo (dorenepalermo@gmail.com).



The staff and students of Westminster School for Young Children spent the last week before our holiday break celebrating Christmas together. Our two-year-olds made special gifts for their parents, and the three-year-olds visited "Santa's Workshop." Our four-year-olds danced joyfully at their Mexican Fiesta. Children, teachers, and parents enjoyed decorating gingerbread houses and baking gingerbread cookies.

Our annual Christmas Sing-Along will be held in the Sanctuary on the last day of school. The children are so excited to sing Christmas carols for their parents and friends!

Thanks to all of you for joining with us in supporting the Durham Rescue Mission through "Megan's Wish." Your donations will help to provide a happy holiday for many young children in our community. We also thank you for your continued support of this preschool program. Our students and staff are blessed to be a part of the Westminster family.

School will reopen on Wednesday, January 3. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Kathy Stickley
Director

youth ministry

news

Youth Christmas Party + Mission Night

Sunday, December 17
5:30-8pm | WPC Campus

For their Christmas Party this year, the youth will share a delicious dinner from The Q Shack and dive into a mission extravaganza! Don't miss out on these fun projects with your youth family:

Stocking the Guidance Offices at Githens Middle School and Hope Valley Elementary with food, clothes, and school supplies for students

Making Warm Blessings Bags (hat, gloves, socks, hand warmers, Christmas card)

Crafting gift tags for the dresses we make for Haiti

Making the tables and chairs in Mission Center and Fellowship Hall sparkle and shine

Shopping for a local student in need

YOUTH MINISTRY CALENDAR

- 12/17** Christmas Party & Mission Night, 5:30-8pm, WPC Campus
- 12/20** Youth Council, 5:30pm, Youth Suite
- 1/2-5** College Montreat Conference, Montreat, NC
- 1/7** Youth Group, 5:30-7pm, Fellowship Hall
- 1/14** Youth Group, 5:30-7pm, Fellowship Hall



See more Lovefeast photos at www.facebook.com/wpcdurham/photos.

December 17 Congregational Meeting

A congregational meeting will be held on December 17 for the Nominating Committee to present a deacon candidate. The candidate, Shirley Rufty, will be presented and nominations may be made from the floor. The vote to approve the nominee as an officer-elect will then take place. Learn more about Shirley:

Shirley Rufty

I grew up in Harmony, NC, a very small town near the foothills, and was raised in a southern Baptist church. I graduated from NC State University, and just recently retired from Duke University Health System, where I was part of the Integration Engineering team designing interfaces between downstream systems and Maestro Care, Duke's electronic health record.

Following graduation from NC State, Salisbury, NC, was home for 12 years. I worked as a Medical Technologist and later as a Laboratory Manager at Rowan Memorial Hospital (now Novant Health Rowan Medical Center). Donald and I met in Salisbury and were married there in First Presbyterian Church. Our children, Maggie and Joseph, were born in Salisbury.

We joined Westminster the year we relocated to Durham, and Westminster has been an integral part of our lives ever since. Maggie and Joseph were confirmed at Westminster and active in youth group and the youth mission trips; Maggie was married at Westminster; and Donald and I have both served as deacons.

2018 Men's Basketball

Interested in fun, fellowship, and good exercise?

WPC has played in the Hope Valley Baptist Church Basketball League for the past 15 years. The league offers fun, competitive action in an atmosphere appropriate for church groups.

Starting in early January, we play 1-2 nights a week for about 2 months. Anyone at least 16 years old is eligible – basketball skill or experience is far from mandatory. Contact Billy McFall (billy_99@yahoo.com) with questions or to **sign up by Wednesday, December 20.**

We give special thanks to Darren Skeen for his work coordinating WPC's basketball teams for many, many years!



Church Finance Overview

Westminster shares an overview of its finances in the newsletter each month.

November Financials

	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Annual Budget
Income:	\$1,022,258	\$1,052,860	\$1,148,574
Expense:	\$1,051,025	\$1,100,529	\$1,200,575
Net:	\$-28,767	\$-47,670	\$-52,001

Making Your Estimate of Giving

This has been a wonderful season of remembering and celebrating the work God has been doing at and through Westminster. We are grateful for every single Estimate of Giving that you have offered to the mission and ministry of the church.

If you have not yet made your Estimate of Giving for 2018 you can do so by:

1. Emailing your Estimate of Giving details to Office Manager Elizabeth Takla at elizabeth@wpcdurham.org or
2. Making your Estimate of Giving online via myWPC at www.wpcdurham.org/eogonline.



Elizabeth's Last Day: December 21

Our wonderful Office Manager, Elizabeth Takla, leaves us next Thursday, December 21, for an opportunity to work with her family's engineering firm. We are so grateful for her work among us. Please take a minute to thank her before next Thursday.

The Personnel Committee is in the process of finalizing a contract with an accounting firm that specializes in churches to work with us through a transition period of 3-4 months. During this time, the Personnel Committee will assess the church's needs in financial oversight and property management, and plans to begin a search by the spring. We're spreading around Elizabeth's other responsibilities in the meantime, and will communicate with you in the next week as new contact people are finalized, especially for year-end financial questions. If you have any questions about end-of-year giving, please be in touch with Elizabeth before December 21 (elizabeth@wpcdurham.org; 919-489-4974, ext. 122).

Gifts of Stock to WPC

Do you give to WPC via stock?

If so, please be sure to contact the office with the details of what kind of stock is coming so that all gifts can be properly accounted for and attributed.

If you're interested in giving by stock, you can learn more at www.wpcdurham.org/give.

Year-End Contribution Guidelines

As you prayerfully consider end-of-year gifts, know that your consistent support is essential for ministry here and throughout Durham. Please contact Elizabeth Takla with questions about payment on your 2017 pledge or additional year-end gifts (elizabeth@wpcdurham.org; 919-489-4974, ext. 122).

The income tax regulations specify that a check dated December 31, 2017, but physically delivered in January 2018 is deductible only on the donor's 2018 federal tax return. Even if a donor backdates a check to read "December 31, 2017," but gives it to the church on or after January 1, 2018, it will be considered a 2018 donation.

The only exception to this rule is the case of a check that is dated, mailed, and postmarked in December 2017. The rules are summarized in the table below.

Type of Contribution	Documented as 2017 Contribution	Documented as 2018 Contribution
Checks written in Dec. 2017 and put in the church offering in Jan. 2018		x
Checks written and put in the church offering in Jan. 2018, but "backdated" to Dec. 2017		x
Checks written and put in the church offering in Dec. 2017 but "postdated" to Jan. 2018		x
Checks written, mailed, and postmarked in Dec. 2017, but received by the church in Jan. 2018	x	
Checks written, and mailed in Dec. 2017, and postmarked and received in Jan. 2018		x



WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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The next WPC newsletter will be published on **January 10**. The deadline to submit material is **January 3**.

To submit material for publication, contact Communication Coordinator Kara Pearce (kara@wpcdurham.org; 919-489-4974, ext. 101).

The newsletter is emailed. If you would like to receive a paper copy by mail, please contact Kara Pearce.

Sunday Morning Preaching Schedule

December 17 - Third Sunday in Advent

Preaching: Chris Tuttle

December 24 - Fourth Sunday in Advent; No 8:30ams service

Preaching: Taylor Lewis Guthrie Hartman

December 31 - Birthday Sunday; No 8:30ams service

Preaching: Betty Berghaus

January 7 - Epiphany, Communion Sunday

Preaching: Chris Tuttle

Worship Volunteers for December 17, 24*, 31*, and January 7

**There will be no 8:30am worship service – only an 11am service – on Sundays, December 24 and December 31.*

ACOLYTES

12/17 Brennan Higgins, Sam Meyen
12/24 Thomas Dean
12/31 **Volunteer Needed**
1/7 Lila Keir, Katherine McFall

LECTORS

12/17 8:30 Bonnie Derr
11:00 Rachel Meyen
12/24 11:00 George Page
12/31 11:00 Blair Chesnut
1/7 8:30 Chuck Byrd
11:00 Lee Murphy

OFFERING COUNTERS

12/17 8:30 Mike Meyen, Jeff Scouten
11:00 Barb & Bill Burig
12/24 11:00 Bill & Mary Anne Pogue
12/31 11:00 Jeremy & Laurel Trantham
1/7 8:30 Laura & Millicent Loehr
11:00 Tali Benignus, Harriette Frank

USHERS

12/17 8:30 Jackie Fryt, Louis & Mary Quin, Brendan Turner
11:00 Shelley Bainter, Marla Dunham, Jami & Ally Howell, Ella Brooks & Heath Tuttle
12/24 11:00 Kenzie Brannon; Melinda, Geoff, Jackson & Georgia Vaughn
12/31 11:00 Margaret & Frank Falkovic, Gray King, Nancy Pearman, Pam Smith, Brendan Turner
1/7 8:30 John Atkins, Andy & Shirley Collins, Dean Lanier
11:00 Barb & Bill Burig, Rayner England, Riley & Cecelia Meath, Jeremy & Laurel Trantham

NURSERY

Every Sunday: Infants, Toddlers, 8:30 2-5 yr olds - WPC Nursery Staff
12/17 2-3: Sara Wylie, **Volunteer Needed**; 4-5: Rachel Chang, Alexis Franzese
12/24 2-3: **Volunteers Needed**; 4-5: **Volunteers Needed**
12/31 2-3: Jeremy & Laurel Trantham; 4-5: Ashley & Hannah Messick
1/7 2-3: Jami Howell, Dawn Lamont; 4-5: Julie Carrow, **Volunteer Needed**

SOUND TECHNICIANS

December 8:30 Doug Wellemeyer 11:00 Mark Hill
January 8:30 Gideon Segbefia 11:00 Blair Chesnut

To sign up for an open spot on a worship volunteer team, please visit www.bit.ly/wpcServe. Email Lee Katrincic to sign up for the March 2018 sound technician team (lkatrincic@gmail.com).

