



Westminster

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

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BLACKSMITHS WHO FORGE GUNS INTO GARDENING TOOLS HOSTING DEMO

RAWtools Buffalo will speak about their work and mission on Sunday, November 5 at Westminster Presbyterian Church. RAWtools is a movement of Christian blacksmiths who disassemble guns that have been surrendered by their owners to create gardening tools, a modern take on the Biblical call to “beat their swords into plowshares” (Isaiah 2:4).

RAWtools partners with congregations, community groups, and police departments across the country to upcycle unwanted guns and create new uses for them. Since each state has different laws and regulations for gun surrender, RAWtools may facilitate a gun surrender event in partnership with a church, or they may receive previously surrendered firearms from police departments. They then disassemble the guns and use the metal and wood to forge spades and mattocks for regular use in a garden.

RAWtools Buffalo was founded in 2019 by Steve Johnson, the pastor of Anchor Church in Buffalo, and Mark Stadley, a church member and a school counselor for the Buffalo Public School System. Mark was motivated to start a RAWtools chapter in Buffalo after experiencing years of devastating losses among his students, including by gun violence and suicide.

Rev. Stacy Smith, the temporary pastor at Westminster Presbyterian Church, invited the Buffalo group to Auburn when she learned about RAWtools this summer. She says, “It’s often difficult to know how the church can best respond to the challenges of gun violence. But one thing we do know is that the Bible calls us to ‘study war no more.’ RAWtools is a uniquely beautiful example of how the church can be prophetic, even in the midst of a challenging political climate.”

Mark will speak at Westminster Presbyterian Church during worship at 9:30 AM, and will then lead a demonstration in the front yard of the church beginning at 11 AM. He will set up a portable propane forge and bring a small anvil so he can demonstrate the blacksmithing technique on site. RAWtools will also have garden tools, jewelry, and other small items for sale to support their broader work.

For more information, visit www.rawtools.org, the RAWtools Buffalo Facebook page at [Facebook.com/rawtoolsbuffalo](https://www.facebook.com/rawtoolsbuffalo) or the Westminster Facebook page at [Facebook.com/WestminsterAuburn](https://www.facebook.com/WestminsterAuburn).