



WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

First Sunday of Advent

3 December 2023 + 10:00 a.m.

Welcome and Announcements

Voluntary

Divinum Mysterium

Robert Hebble

***Ringing of the Bell**

The congregation rises at the ringing of the Tower Bell.

***Lighting of the First Advent
Candle and Call to Worship**

The O'Reilly Family

One: In a world where so many despair,
God lights a candle of hope in our hearts.

All: **We wait together for a Savior,
who will be Emmanuel, Christ the Lord**

One: People of God, the light of hope calls us together.

All: **From our solitude, we are called into community,
From our brokenness, we are called into wholeness.**

One: People of God, come, for the light of hope calls us together.

All: **Let us take the hand of God and carry this light together.**
(The First Advent Candle is lit.)

***Processional Hymn 88**

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Veni Emmanuel

Verses 1-4

***Prayer of Confession**

Holy and Loving God who came to us in Emmanuel, you call us into community to wait together for you, but we so often lose sight of hope. In a culture that devalues and admonishes waiting, teach us the art of waiting and forgive us for those times we have not waited. In your mercy, forgive us. Renew us in hope, that we may live lives of hope and integrity until you come again. Hear now our silent prayers of confession.

***Sung Response**

Lord, Have Mercy Upon Us

Hymnal, Back Cover

***Declaration of Pardon and
Passing of the Peace**

Leader: Friends, believe the good news.
People: **In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.**
Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.
People: **And also with you.**
Leader: Let us greet one another with the sign of peace. Amen.

***Response of Praise**

Gloria Patri Hymnal, Back Cover
*Children (Pre-K-Grade 5) and Youth (Grades 6-7) are invited to
come forward for the Children's Anthems & Sacrament of Baptism.*

Children's Anthems

Westminster Children's Choir

Light One Candle
Away in the Manger
Happy Birthday, Jesus!

Sacrament of Baptism

Waterlife

I was there to hear your borning cry,
I'll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized
to see your life unfold.
When you hear the wonder of the Word,
I'll be there to cheer you on.
You were raised to praise the living Lord
to whom you now belong.
I was there to hear your borning cry,
I'll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized
to see your life unfold.

*Following the response Students in preschool – Grade 7 will
go to Sunday school and confirmation prep.*

First Scripture Reading

Isaiah 64:1-4 Pew Bible, OT pages 694

Second Scripture Reading

I Corinthians 1:4-9 Pew Bible, NT page 166
Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.
People: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon The Art of Waiting Rev. Dr. Blythe D. Kieffer
Text: —so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 1:7

Anthem When God's Time Had Ripened Alfred V. Fedak

When God's time had ripened, Mary's womb bore fruit,
scion of the Godhead, sprung from Jesse's root:
so the True Vine branches from the lilly's stem,
the Rose without blemish blooms in Bethlehem.

More than mind can fathom, limit or untwine,
this mysterious yoking, human and divine,
but what reason fetters faith at length unlocks,
and wise hearts discover truth in paradox.

As the Bread of heaven, that we might be fed,
chose a manger cradle in the House of Bread,
so has Life Eternal mingled in the womb
with our mortal nature to confound the tomb.

For this swaddled infant in a humble place
hold our hope of glory and our means of grace;
in the Love enfleshed here dawns the world's rebirth,
promise of salvation, pledge of peace on earth.

***Affirmation of Faith** The Nicene Creed (2.1)

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human. Amen.**

The Church at Prayer

Choir: Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place,
I can feel God's mighty power and God's grace.
I can hear the brush of angels' wings
I see glory on each face;
Surely the presence of God is in this place.

Pastor: The Lord be with you.
People: **And with your spirit.**
Pastor: Let us pray.

Prayers of the People and The Lord's Prayer

The Presentation of our Gifts

*At this time all worshipers are invited to sign and pass
the Ministry of Friendship folders in the pew racks.*

Offertory

Come, Savior of the Nations

J. S. Bach

*Offertory Response

Doxology

Hymnal, 606

Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise God, all creatures here below
Praise God above, ye heavenly host
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*Prayer of Dedication

**Eternal God, through long generations you prepared a
way for the coming of your Son, and by your Spirit you still
bring light to illumine our paths. Renew us in faith teach us
the art of waiting, and turn the offerings of our lives into
signs of hope. Amen.**

*Hymn 88

O Come, O Come Emmanuel
Verses 5-7

Veni Emmanuel

*Charge and Benediction

*Choral Response

Heaven and Earth Are Ringing

Giovanni Gastoldi

Heaven and earth are ringing; join in the angel's singing.
Sing noel for Christ is born. Come, sing, for Christ is born.

*Voluntary

Come, Savior of the Nations

Kenneth T. Kosche

(*) The congregation is invited to stand.

SERVING THIS SUNDAY AT WESTMINSTER

- **Sunday Liturgists:** Rev. Christian K. Choi
- **Greeters:** Mary and Bob Leffler
- **Acolytes:** Lucy Bassett and Lily Swanson
- **Advent Candle Lighters:** The O'Reilly Family: Eric, Laura, Maeven, Emmett, Holland, and Rowan
- **Ushers:** George Botanga (Head Usher) Mervice Alah Abung, Terry Haynor, Melanie Humphrey, Mary King, Julie McDonough, John McNutt, Bruce Strom
- **Safety Team:** John Stafford
- **Music:** The Westminster Choir, Dale Rogers, organist

EDUCATION AND FELLOWSHIP THIS SUNDAY AT WESTMINSTER

- **9:30 a.m. – 12 noon** **Infants, toddlers, preschoolers (Nursery)** This week's Bible Story: "Anything is Possible with God." *Caregivers: Erin Winn, Maria Lafrenz, and Leigh Milward*
- **10:00 – 11:00 a.m.**
 - **Children Kindergarten – Grade 5** will begin in worship with their families & go to Sunday school following the Congregational Response. The story is "A Loving Greeting" (1 Cor 1:3-9). Teachers: *Chelsea and Adam Ekstedt*
 - **Grades 6-7 Confirmation Prep (Conference Room)** meet following the Children's Sermon for Lesson Eight: "Commands." *Teachers: Cara Barrett and Mary Ray*
- **11:15 a.m. – 12 noon**
 - **Parish Nurse Ministry (Church Office)** Ellen Carpenter is available for consultation.
 - **Fair Trade Ministry (West Narthex)** Items will be available for stocking stuffers.
 - **Advent Celebration (Parish Hall)** All are invited to Parish Hall for cookie-decorating, ornament-making, holiday brunch, and caroling!
 - **Mission and Community Service Committee (Youth Room)** Members will gather to organize Adopt-A-Family gifts which will be delivered to Contact Ministries on Monday.
- **12 noon – 1:30 p.m. Jr. & Sr. High Youth Shop for Contact Ministries.** Following brunch at the Advent Celebration, we will gather in the West Narthex and head out to Target to buy gifts for local youth who are a part of Contact Ministries using the money raised at the Spud Bake! We will not meet for our regular evening program.

WI-FI Hearing Assistance System is available in our Sanctuary. A basket is located at each Sanctuary entrance with instructions to install the app for those with Bluetooth enabled hearing aids, lanyards, and hearing amplifier packets for those with regular hearing aids, hearing amplifier packets and disposable earbuds for those without hearing aids. Please return the lanyards and hearing amplifier packets at the end of worship. For assistance, ask an usher.

The Library Committee has prepared a cart of books for checkout from both of our libraries in the West Narthex containing philosophy, psychology, and other research books and a wide variety of Christmas books. Please plan to stop and peruse the books and resources.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WE WELCOME VISITORS! Information about who we are is in our Welcome Brochure located in the pew pockets and on our website at www.wpcspi.org. Please complete the Ministry of Friendship folder located on the end of each pew. If you are interested in joining Westminster, please speak to one of the pastors.

2024 STEWARDSHIP THEME: GROWING IN GENEROSITY – ROOTED IN FAITH As of Thursday, November 30, we received 220 pledges totaling \$844,866 which is 99.4% of the \$850,000 goal. Thank you to all who pledged. If you have not made a pledge, please do so before the end of the year. Pledges can also be made online at www.wpcspi.org.



THE CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING is an annual special collection of the PC(USA). It supports church workers and families in times of need, and funds scholarships for racial/ethnic students. Please give toward this special fund.

MITTEN GIVING TREE Thirty mittens/gloves were delivered to Kumler Outreach Ministries last week by Sue Cull on behalf of K2P4. Members are invited to bring mittens/gloves and place them on the tree during Advent.

PASTORS BEGIN ELEVENTH YEAR OF PRAYER MINISTRY - Throughout the year, each member of our congregation is remembered in prayer by the pastors in the Chancel. A letter is mailed three weeks prior to the week to provide an opportunity to share prayer requests.

RUTH AND NAOMI CIRCLE meets on Wednesday, December 6, 7:00 p.m. at the home of Judy Knox (2004 Maryknoll PL, 62704). Diane Rutledge will lead the devotional by Teresa of Avila: Striving to Make Progress (pgs. 163-169) from the book, Devotional Classics, edited by Richard J. Foster and James Bryan Smith. RSVP to Judy at 217691-1057.

UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN The Springfield Choral Society will perform “Unto Us a Child is Born” concert on December 9, 7:30 p.m. at Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception (524 E. Lawrence Ave). Tickets are \$20.00. Jennie Alt, Jamie Greenwald, Craig Kniffin, Jim Kontio, Adam Miller, Dale Rogers, Brian Richards, Eleanor and Lyle VanDeventer of the Westminster community sing in this choral society.

ADULT EDUCATION FORUM presents **No Room at the Inn: Homeless & Refugee Ministries** on **Sundays, December 10 and 17**, 11:15 a.m. to 12 noon in Parish Hall. We welcome Rev. Josh Sabo of the Heartland Continuum of Care on the 10th and Westminster’s Refugee Initiative with WelcomeCorps will be presented by co-chairs Rachael Hickman and Jess Weitzel on the 17th. Archivist Sue Cull will share a brief history of Westminster’s refugee outreach during our 188 years.

ELIZABETH CIRCLE meets on Monday, December 11, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. at the Illinois Presbyterian Home for their annual Christmas luncheon, which will be catered by Qdoba for \$17.00 per person (Checks payable to Eleanor VanDeventer). Please bring your own beverage. RSVP by December 4 to Eleanor (217-341-4032).

PRESBYTERIAN MEN’S BREAKFAST will be Thursday, December 14 at 8:00 a.m. in Parish Hall. Pete VanGieson will present an overview of Westminster’s 2023 Mission Giving. Charlie King will provide breakfast. Please RSVP on our website or by contacting the church office.

ADVENT AT WESTMINSTER

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT: DECEMBER 3

ADVENT WREATH, CHILDREN'S MUSIC during 10:00 a.m. service

We begin the Season of Advent, the time of waiting and preparing, on Sunday, December 3 with the lighting of the Advent Wreath. Thank you to the O'Reilly, Capler, and Lafrenz families for leading us in this Westminster tradition this year.

The 10:00 a.m. service will include special music by the Children's Choir (Grades K-5) under the direction of Katie Moore, Director for Children's Music.

ADVENT CELEBRATION at 11:15 a.m. in Parish Hall

A reception in Parish Hall will follow worship and include a festive brunch, the singing of Christmas Carols, the creating of ornaments, and the decorating of Christmas cookies. Children who were not in Sunday School on November 26 will have the opportunity to create an advent wreath for home.

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT: DECEMBER 10

CHRISTMAS VESPERS at 4:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary

On Sunday, December 10 at 4:00 p.m. in the afternoon, Westminster's Christmas Vespers program will include choral music and carols sung by the Westminster Choir and the St. Andrew's Sisters, with Dale Rogers, Organist. Vespers will include the seasonal music of Adelman, Friedell, Forrest, Purcell, Halls, Rawsthorne, Bach, Spirituals, and more.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT: DECEMBER 17

SUNDAY SCHOOL PROCESSION during 10:00 a.m. service

The Sunday School children will recreate the Nativity in the Third Floor Chapel and process in their costumes during the closing hymn "Joy to the World" and conclude in the Chancel with the pastors for the Charge and Benediction.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT: DECEMBER 24

10:00 a.m. Children's Christmas Pageant On Our Way to Bethlehem

The Confirmation youth and Bridges children will narrate the Christmas story in a more elaborate pageant with special music by the Children's Choir and Eleanor VanDeventer. We welcome Millie and John McNutt with newborn son, James, as our Holy Family. All children are invited to participate as shepherds, angels, and lambs.

CHRISTMAS MUSIC AND DECORATION FUNDS

Members and friends are invited to make a suggested donation of \$25 to support Westminster's decorations funds, which includes the poinsettias. You may send a check or go online at www.wpcspi.org to donate. Donations of \$25 or more to the Special Music Fund are also accepted at this time. Please submit your donations with your desired wording and dedications by Monday, December 11. Thank you for your generosity!

THIS WEEK AT WESTMINSTER

Monday, December 4

9:00 AM Garden Club (Parish Hall)

Tuesday, December 5

10:30 AM Staff Meeting (Pastor's Study)
11:30 AM Knit 2, Purl 4 Christmas Luncheon
(2nd Floor Classroom)
12:00 PM KDO Willing Circle (Youth Room)
1:00 PM Knit 2 Purl 4 (2nd Floor Classroom)
3:00 PM Compass for Kids
7:30 PM St. Andrew's Sisters Rehearsal (Off site)

Wednesday, December 6

10:00 AM Pastors Pray in the Chancel
10:30 AM Worship Planning (Pastor's Study)
4:00 PM Bridges (Tower Classroom)
4:00 PM Depression and Bi-Polar Support Group
(Conference Room)
4:45 PM Fiscal Committee (Pastor's Study)
5:00 PM Children's Choir (Music Room)
5:30 PM Mission & Community Service
(2nd Floor Classroom)
7:00 PM Ruth and Naomi Circle (Off site)

Thursday, December 7

2:30 PM Memory Loss (2nd Floor Classroom)
7:00 PM Choir (Music Room)

Friday, December 8

5:00 PM Meal Delivered to Helping Hands Shelter

Saturday, December 9

9:30 AM Choir Practice (Sanctuary)

Sunday, December 10

Holy Communion

10:00 AM Worship Service (Sanctuary)
10:15 AM Sunday School PreK-5 (Sanctuary)
11:15 AM Adult Ed Forum (Parish Hall)
11:15 AM Senior High Lessons and Carols Practice
(Sanctuary)
4:00 PM Westminster Choir Vespers (Sanctuary)
5:00 PM Vespers Reception (Parish Hall)
5:30 PM Youth Group Holiday Party (Off site)

Westminster Presbyterian Church
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<http://www.wpcspi.org>

WESTMINSTER STAFF

The Rev. Dr. Blythe D. Kieffer
Pastor and Head of Staff

The Reverend Christian K. Choi
Associate Pastor for Parish Life

The Reverend Gerald W. Boutelle
Parish Associate

Dale T. Rogers
Director of Music and the Arts

Mary Ray
Interim Director for Youth

Meleah and Aaron Berkowitz
Co-Directors for Children's Ministry

Katie Moore
Director for Children's Music

Millie McNutt, Erin Winn
Nursery Coordinators

Emily Rowley, Keri Tate
Cooperative Preschool Staff

Ellen Carpenter
Parish Nurse

Pat Hymans
Hospitality Coordinator

Lisa Runkle
Financial Administrator

Jennie Alt
Church Administrative Assistant

Krista Steller
Communications Coordinator

Gary Warnick
Building and Property Manager

**Peter Bysko, James Capler,
Terry Gietl, Bill Hibbert**
Part-time Custodians