WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Fourth Sunday of Lent
30 March 2025 + 10:00 a.m.

Welcome and Announcements

Voluntary Prélude — César Franck

***Ringing of the Bell** *The congregation rises at the ringing of the Tower Bell.*

***Call to Worship**

Leader: Cry out with joy to the Lord, all the earth.
Worship the Lord with gladness, all creatures.
People: Come into God's presence with singing.
Return to the Lord, your God.
Leader: For the Lord is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
People: God's faithfulness endures to all generations,
Welcoming us home with a forgiving embrace.

Lenten Candle Service

As we extinguish the fourth Lenten candle and continue our walk toward Holy Week, stories of homecomings and reconciliation remind us of holy ground, celebrations, and sojourns.

Let us pray:

God of grace, you run out to meet us in love when we anticipate having to beg for your mercy. You see our uniqueness and know our value as your children. As we bask in your embrace and the unexpected gift of your mercy, our excitement grows. Knowing the joy of such grace, we look to live in ways that cause your mercy and goodness to explode and overflow into every corner of our homes, community, and world. Amen.

***Hymn 15** All Creatures of Our God and King *Lasst Uns Erfreuen*
Stanzas 1, 2, 4, 6

***Prayer of Confession**

God of mercy, your hopes for us are greater than our own, yet our failures do not surprise you. Forgive, us, we pray, even for the sin we cannot see or find too painful to confess. God of the prodigal, accept us as we are so that we may accept ourselves. Teach us to affirm what is good in our lives and to put behind us what is unworthy, that by your grace we may live in confidence and joy, in the manner of Jesus our Lord. Hear now our silent prayers of confession.

***Sung Response** Lord, Have Mercy Upon Us Hymnal, Back Cover

***Declaration of Pardon**

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's Sermon *Students in grades Pre-K – 7 will go to Sunday school and Confirmation Prep during the Congregational Response.*

Congregational Response Spirit of the Living God *Living God*

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Melt me; mold me; fill me; use me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

First Scripture Reading Genesis 33:1-10 Pew Bible, OT page 30

Second Scripture Reading Luke 15:1-3, 11-32 Pew Bible, OT pages 78-79

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon A Time to Embrace — Rev. Dr. Blythe D. Kieffer

Text: "But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him." Luke 15:20b

Anthem Cantique de Jean Racine — Gabriel Fauré

O thou alone, our hope, true sacred Word of heaven and earth, the day's eternal light pierces the calm of night, and our prayer is heard. Savior divine, keep us in thy sight.

***Affirmation of Faith** — Brief Statement of Faith (Part II)

We trust in God,whom Jesus called Abba, Father.
In sovereign love God created the world good
and makes everyone equally in God's image
male and female, of every race and people,
to live as one community.

But we rebel against God; we hide from our Creator.
Ignoring God's commandments,
we violate the image of God in others and ourselves,
accept lies as truth, exploit neighbor and nature,
and threaten death to the planet entrusted to our care.
We deserve God's condemnation.

Yet God acts with justice and mercy
to redeem creation. In everlasting love,
the God of Abraham and Sarah chose a covenant people
to bless all families of the earth.
Hearing their cry, God delivered the children of Israel
from the house of bondage.

Loving us still,
God makes us heirs with Christ of the covenant.
Like a mother who will not forsake her nursing child,
like a father who runs to welcome the prodigal home,
God is faithful still.

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 the Lord is in this place.

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

Prayers of the People
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 Oboe Sonata — Camille Saint-Saëns

***Offertory Response** Doxology — Hymnal, 606

***Prayer of Dedication**

God of holy ground, celebrations, and sojourns, thank you for welcoming us home with a loving embrace. Knowing the joy of such grace, we offer the gifts of our labor and our lives. May these be used in ways that cause your mercy and goodness to explode and overflow into every corner of our homes, community, and world, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

***Hymn 22** God of the Sparrow — *Roeder*

***Charge and Benediction**

Closing Response Amen — William Smith

***Voluntary** Chacone in d-minor — François Couperin

(*) The congregation is invited to stand.

SUNDAY AT WESTMINSTER

- **Sunday Liturgist:** Rev. Sarah A. Bishop
- **Call to Worship and Lenten Candle Service:** Barb and Pete Sherman
- **Greeters:** Trish McClelland and Nancy Reed
- **Acolytes:** Lucy Bassett and Conner Hill
- **Ushers:** Greg Boutelle (Head Usher), Christian Kennerly, Todd Lafrenz, Claudia Nash, Bernie Wiseman, Randy Wiseman, Cathy Yokley
- **Music:** The Westminster Choir, Lucy Yockey, Oboe, and Dale Rogers, Organist
- **Safety Team:** Brad Steller
- **Videography and Sound:** Bob Fox, Krista Steller, Bill Deemer

EDUCATION AND FELLOWSHIP THIS SUNDAY

- **9:45 a.m. – 12 noon Infants, toddlers, and two-year-olds (Nursery)** gather for play and Bible Story. This week's story: "Joseph and His Brothers" *Caregiver: Erin Winn*
- **10:00 – 11:00 a.m. Children in Pre-K – Grade 5 and youth in Grades 6 - 7** begin in worship & go to Sunday school and Confirmation Prep following the Congregational Response.
  - **Preschool - Ages 3-5 (Preschool Classroom lower level)** Story: "Jesus' Miracle Fed Many People" (Jesus Feeds a Crowd I) *Teachers: Leigh Milward, Maria DeJong*
  - **Kindergarten - Grade 2 (Third Floor Chapel)** This week's story: "Welcome Home!" (Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32) *Teacher: Meleah Berkowitz*
  - **Grades 3-5 (Third Floor Classroom)** This week's story: "Forgiving Love" (Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32) *Teacher: Aaron Berkowitz, Cathy Brower*
  - **Grades 6-7 Confirmation Prep (Conference Room)** This week's lesson: "Summary and Review" *Teachers: Mary Ray and Joe Fierstos*
- **11:15 a.m. – Noon**
  - **Grade 8 Confirmation Class (Conference Room)** Lesson: Statements of Faith and Confirmation *Teacher: Rev. Sarah Bishop*
  - **Adult Ed Forum (Parish Hall)** presents **History of The SIU School of Medicine** presented by a founding faculty member, Dr. Roland Folse, and Dr. Kevin Dorsey, who served as Dean from 2002-2018.
  - **5:00 p.m. TRIVIA NIGHT (PARISH HALL)**

    Gather your friends and join us for a fun, competitive evening supporting our mission-minded youth.

    DOORS OPEN AT 5:00 P.M. Dinner is available for $5.00 and prepared by Pat Hymans and her kitchen team. Participants are also welcome to bring snacks and non-alcoholic drinks.

    QUESTIONS BEGIN AT 5:30 P.M. Once again, we welcome Aaron Berkowitz and Mark Luttrell who will create and present the questions.

    TICKETS ARE $20.00 and can be purchased this morning or at the door.

    ROUND SPONSORSHIP IS $100 - You or your business can sponsor a round and will be featured on the screen between rounds. Contact Aaron Berkowitz immediately after church if interested.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WE WELCOME VISITORS! Information about who we are is in our Welcome Brochure located in the pew pockets and on our website www.wpcspi.org. Please complete the Ministry of Friendship folder located at the end of each pew. If you are interested in joining the next new member class, speak to Dr. Kieffer or Rev. Bishop.

LENTEN CANDLE SERVICE During Lent, Westminster's Sunday worship service begins with a Lenten Candle Service woven into the Call to Worship. A candle will be extinguished each Sunday of Lent leading to Easter to commemorate Christ's journey to the cross. **This morning, new members Barb and Pete Sherman will lead us.** Barb is a licensed Clinical Social Worker and has a private counseling practice. Pete is the Managing Editor of the Illinois Bar Journal for the Illinois State Bar Association.

Westminster Presbyterian Church
190 YEARS
Celebrating Faith, Art & Advocacy

ANNIVERSARY LOGO Thank you to Maggie Pinke who created the logo for Westminster's 190th Anniversary Celebration. Two signs were installed near our Walnut Street Entrance and on Edwards Street as we prepare for Founders' Sunday on May 18.

RUTH AND NAOMI CIRCLE meets on Wednesday, April 2 at 7:00 p.m. at the home of Ellen Carpenter (2529 Wydown Ave, 62704). Christy Pound will lead the devotional by Catherine of Genoa entitled "Waiting upon God." (pp. 180-185) from the book, Devotional Classics.

PW LUNCHEON Friday, April 4 at 12 noon in Parish Hall. This is a mission project day, so Midwest Mission will guide us in making personal dignity kits. Carolyn Beatty is the Chair of the Day and Ann Collins is the Kitchen Chair.

THE ADULT ED FORUM presents **American Revolution** on Sundays, April 6 and 13. On the 250th Anniversary of the Revolutionary War, we will explore how Presbyterian Polity influenced American Democracy. Led by Dr. Aaron Berkowitz.

LEGACY OF FAITH PLANNED GIVING RECEPTION will be Tuesday, April 8 from 5:30 – 7:00 p.m. at the home of Blythe and Peter Kieffer (26 Island Bay Lane, 62712). Hosted by the Support and Endowment Committee, the purpose of the gathering is to thank those who have remembered Westminster in their will and to invite others to consider this opportunity. All are welcome. Please RSVP with Jennie Alt by Monday, April 7 at noon.

PRESBYTERIAN MEN'S BREAKFAST Thursday, April 10 at 8:00 a.m. in Parish Hall. Dr. David Sandercock will address men's health topics and answer questions.

DMA (Don't Mention Age) will meet Friday, April 11 at 5:30 p.m. for a potluck and Program at 6:15 p.m. Bob Bunn will speak on the "Bunn & Lincoln Family Friendship." RSVP with weekly email link, website, or by calling the church office.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING - We are receiving donations toward this multi-denominational annual collection throughout Lent. This ecumenical, special offering goes to the Presbyterian Hunger Program, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, and self-development of people throughout the world.

One Great HOUR OF SHARING

THE EASTER MUSIC AND DECORATIONS FUNDS provide for the Millikin Brass Quartet on Easter Day as well as other musical offerings and for the palms and lilies for Holy Week and Easter. The suggested donation is $25 per fund. For both giving opportunities, a list of donors and those whom they are remembering are printed in the Easter bulletin. Make checks to WPC with the appropriate designations. The deadline for the bulletin wording is Palm Sunday, April 13.

HOLY WEEK

PALM SUNDAY, APRIL 13
10:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary

The Reverend Dr. Blythe D. Kieffer will preach. During the 10:00 a.m. worship service, Sunday school children and youth will lead us in the processional with palms and their One Great Hour of Sharing fish boxes. The center aisle pews will be lined with donated coats. The Westminster Children's Choir will sing *Hosanna, Heysanna, Wave Your Palms,* and the Westminster Choir will sing *O Divine Redeemer* of Gounod.

THE PASSION OF CHRIST ART DISPLAY
April 13-20 in Parish Hall

Artwork depicting the Passion of Christ will be displayed in Parish Hall. Through the eyes of renowned artists, we will witness Christ's entry into Jerusalem and the events of Holy Week leading to His crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. Westminster's Labyrinth will be displayed in Parish Hall during Holy Week for those who would like to practice this discipline of prayer.

MAUNDY THURSDAY COMMUNION SERVICE, APRIL 17
7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary

The Reverend Sarah A. Bishop will preach, and the Westminster Choir will sing *To Mock Your Reign, O Dearest Lord*, *What Wondrous Love is This*, and *Lamb of God*. The service will include the solemn stripping of the Chancel accompanied by the *Adagio for Strings* of Samuel Barber and the seven last words of Christ.

EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 20
10:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary

The Reverend Dr. Blythe D. Kieffer will preach, and the Westminster Choir will be joined by members of the Millikin Brass in Handel's *Hallelujah Chorus*, *The Coronation Te Deum* of Stanford and other festive music for Easter Day. The Chancel will be filled with the cross of lilies, a cherished tradition at Westminster.

Easter Egg Hunt in Parish Hall follows 10:00 a.m. Worship.

LENTEN COAT DRIVE – We are collecting new or lightly used coats in the West Narthex which will line the center pews of our Sanctuary on Palm Sunday and then be donated to Contact Ministries. **Thank you for the 26 coats already donated.**

THIS WEEK AT WESTMINSTER

Monday, March 31
5:30 PM Dr. Kieffer's Retirement Committee(Library)

Tuesday, April 1
7:00 AM – 7:00 PM Polling Place (Parish Hall)
10:30 AM Staff Meeting (Pastor's Study)
1:00 PM Knit 2, Purl 4 (2nd Floor Classroom)
3:00 PM COMPASS
5:30 PM PNC Meeting (Library)
7:00 PM St. Andrew's Sisters (off site)

Wednesday, April 2
10:00 AM Pastors Pray in Chancel
10:00 AM Sing by Heart Dementia Choir (Parish Hall)
10:30 AM Worship Planning (Pastor's Study)
12:00 AM KDO Willing Circle (Parish Hall)
12:30 AM Reporter Folding (2nd Floor Classroom)
3:30 PM Depression and Bi-Polar Group (Youth Rm)
4:00 PM Bridges (Tower Classroom)
5:00 PM Children's Choir (Music Room)
5:30 PM Mission & Community Service (2nd Floor Classroom)
6:30 PM D & D Group (Library)
7:00 PM Ruth & Naomi (2529 Wydown Ave)
7:00 PM Great Decision in WACCI (3rd Floor Classroom)

Thursday, April 3
4:00 PM WPC Presbyterian Home Worship (IPH)
5:30 PM Dr. Kieffer's Bible Study (2nd Floor Class)
6:30 PM WCP Board Meeting (Zoom)
7:00 PM Westminster Choir (Music Room)

Friday, April 4
11:00 AM PW Board Meeting (Conference Room)
12:00 PM PW Luncheon (Parish Hall)

Saturday, April 5
11:00 AM Church Mice

Sunday, April 6
10:00 AM Worship Service (Sanctuary)
10:15 AM Sunday School (Pre-K- Grade 5)
11:15 AM Adult Ed Forum (Parish Hall)

Westminster Presbyterian Church
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Phone (217) 522-4415 www.wpcspi.org

WESTMINSTER STAFF

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

The Reverend Sarah A. Bishop
Associate Pastor for Family Ministry

The Reverend Gerald W. Boutelle
Parish Associate

Dale T. Rogers
Director of Music and the Arts

Mary Ray
Director for Youth

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

Kara Milward, 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

Braden Barton, James Capler, Terry Gietl, Javier Velásquez
Part-time Custodians