WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
First Sunday of Advent
30 November 2025 + 10:00 a.m.

Welcome and Announcements

Voluntary Contemplation — Felix Mendelssohn

Introit

O come, O come, Immanuel,
Come now to earth and with thy people dwell,
The world awaits from heaven a holy sign,
O come and show to us the light divine.

O come, O come, Immanuel,
As age to age the prophets did foretell;
Redeemer come to save us one and all,
Be born again in Bethl'hem's manger stall.

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

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

Leader: In the winter, we long for sunlight.
People: **We light candles to testify that the earth will turn and the light will come again.**
Leader: In our lives, we long for Christ.
People: **We light candles to testify that the day will come when Christ will come again.**

(The First Advent Candle is lit.)

***Processional Hymn 107** Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn — *Rejoice*

***Unison Prayer of Confession**

Holy God, we live as if you do not see us,
do not see what we do and fail to do.
Bring us blinking into the light
that we may live as your children
full of hope and truth and grace upon grace.

***Silent Confession**

During this silence, worshipers are asked to offer individual 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.

***Response of Praise**

Gloria Patri
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be
world without end, Amen, Amen.

Children's Sermon

Congregational Response

Come Savior, Quickly Come (Sung three times)

Come Savior, quickly come.
Come Savior, quickly come.
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, come Savior, quickly come.

Children in Pre Kindergarten - Grade 5 will go to their Sunday school classes. Youth in Grades 6-7 go to Confirmation Prep following the congregational response.

Prayer for Illumination

First Scripture Reading

Isaiah 2:1-5 — Pew Bible, OT pages 631-632

Second Scripture Reading Romans 13:8-12 Pew Bible, NT pages 162

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon Dreaming Up Hope Rev. Sarah A. Bishop

Anthem Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence Healey Willan

The text for the anthem is 346 in the hymnal.

***Affirmation of Faith** Excerpt from *The Confession of 1967*

The life, death, resurrection, and promised coming of Jesus Christ has set the pattern for the church's mission. His life as man involves the church in the common life of humanity. His service to people commits the church to work for every form of human well-being. His suffering makes the church sensitive to all the sufferings of humankind so that it sees the face of Christ in the faces of people in every kind of need. His crucifixion discloses to the church God's judgment on human's inhumanity to people and the awful consequences of its own complicity in injustice. In the power of the risen Christ and the hope of his coming, the church sees the promise of God's renewal of human's life in society and of God's victory over all wrong.

The church follows this pattern in the form of its life and in the method of its action. So to live and serve is to confess Christ as Lord. Amen.

The Church at Prayer

Choir: Surely the presence of our God 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 our 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 The People That Walked in Darkness — George F. Handel

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light, and they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

***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**

God of righteousness, you have saved us from the worst the world can do and have promised to redeem the whole creation when Christ comes again. In faith and hope we offer our gifts of money and self, that we may be part of what you are doing in the world even now, as we watch for Christ's coming in glory. Amen

***Hymn 100** My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

Star of the County Down

***Charge and Benediction**

Closing Response Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming — Michael Praetorius

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung,
of Jesse's lineage coming, by faithful prophets sung.
It came, a floweret bright, amid the cold of winter,
When half-spent was the night.

***Voluntary** Come, Savior of the Nations — Kenneth Kosche

(*) The congregation is invited to stand.

SERVING THIS SUNDAY AT WESTMINSTER

- **Chancel Flowers** are in honor of Priscilla and Tim Kluge's 50th Wedding Anniversary
- **Sunday Liturgist**: Rev. Gerald W. Boutelle
- **Advent Candle Lighters:** Maud Essel and John Addo-Yobo and Francis and Madesyn
- **Acolytes**: Sam Berkowitz and Paislee Reich
- **Greeter:** Dorothy Hutchinson-Gross
- **Ushers:** Sabrina Holmes (Head Usher), Ben Arnold, Michella Arnold, Linda Caupert, Kyle Duffy, Chris Hickman, Joyce King, Erin Winn
- **Safety Team:** Peter Van Gieson
- **Music:** The Advent Singers; Harper and Reese Huston, Maria Lafrenz, Lily Swanson. The Westminster Choir, Brian Richardson, Bass, and Dale Rogers, Organist
- **Videographers:** Bill Deemer, Krista Steller
- **Liturgy** written by Rev. Carol Holbrook Prickett

EDUCATION AND FELLOWSHIP THIS SUNDAY AT WESTMINSTER

- **9:45 a.m. – 12 noon Infants, toddlers, and two-year-olds (Nursery)** gather for play and Bible Story. This week's story: "Families Can Forgive Each Other." (Joseph and His Brothers) *Caregiver: Kara Milward*
- **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 following the Congregational Response.
  - **Preschool - Ages 3-5 (Preschool Classroom lower level)** Story: "God Watches Over Us Like a Shepherd" (The Lost Sheep and Coin) *Teachers: Julie and Mike Sundquist*
  - **Kindergarten - Grade 2 (Third Floor Chapel)** This week's story: "God's Peaceful World" (Isaiah 2:1-5) *Teacher: Meleah Berkowitz*
  - **Grades 3-5 (Third Floor Classroom)** This week's story: "The Light of the World" (Isaiah 2:1-5) *Teacher: Aaron Berkowitz*
  - **Confirmation Prep (Conference Room)** Students in Grade 6-7 will study Session 5: "God's Community." *Teachers: Mary Ray and Joe Fierstos*
- **11:15 a.m. – Noon**
  - **Adult Ed Forum (Parish Hall)** Prisons and Prisoners in the Bible and Illinois. Led by Michael Long, Ordained Minister and current Warden at Logan Correctional Center.
  - **Confirmation (Conference Room)** Students in Grade 8 will study Session 7: "Corruption, Division." *Teachers: Aaron Berkowitz and Mary Ray*

THOSE WHO WOULD LIKE TO DONATE TO
WESTMINSTER MINISTRIES ARE WELCOME TO SCAN HERE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WE WELCOME VISITORS! Information about us 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 on the end of each pew. If you are interested in joining Westminster, speak with one of the pastors.

ADULT ED FORUM PRESENTS: PRISONS AND PRISONERS IN THE BIBLE AND ILLINOIS Guest speaker, Michael Long will lead discussion in Parish Hall following worship today. Scripture speaks of numerous individuals being imprisoned as well as the responsibility of followers of Jesus to those who are imprisoned. There will be a brief history of incarceration in the western world and outline of the current status of Corrections in Illinois, and how the Church can impact those incarcerated as well as those who work in this setting. Led by Michael Long, Ordained Minister and current Warden at Logan Correctional Center.

2026 STEWARDSHIP UPDATE Pledges for 2026 were dedicated during our worship service on October 26 in the baptismal font brass bowl as a symbol of our faithfulness to this covenant community. Pledges for 2026 are still being accepted. Please complete the pledge card and place it in the offering plate today. Pledges can also be made online at www.wpcspi.org.

BREADLINE SUNDAY THANK YOU Last Sunday, members donated $1,177 in support of the St. John's Breadline, which nearly doubled last year's donation. An anonymous sponsor supplied bread to Springfield churches. Thank you for your generosity!

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 and/or music fund. You may send a check or go online at www.wpcspi.org to donate. Please submit your donations with your desired wording and dedications by Monday, December 15.

CHRISMON BOOKLETS which outline the history and meaning of the ornaments displayed on Westminster's Chrismon Tree located in the Chancel, can be found in the pew pockets.

THE CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING is an annual special collection of the Presbyterian Church. It supports church workers and their families in times of need and funds scholarships for racial/ethnic students. Please look for the offering envelopes to give toward this special fund and nurture the promise of future leaders and those who serve the church. **PREPARE THE WAY** is this year's theme.

CONTACT MINISTRIES ADOPT A FAMILY This Christmas season, Westminster is sponsoring the nine families living in the Contact Ministries transitional shelter, providing Christmas gifts as they work their way toward independence. The signup links are available at wpcspi.org. Gifts can be dropped off at the church office, ordered for direct delivery to Westminster (make sure to notify Jennie Alt to expect a package!), or Jennie can shop for you with donations. **All gifts need to be at the church by Sunday, December 7.** Mission committee representatives will be in the West Narthex today following the worship service with printed lists of remaining gifts for selection.

PW CHRISTMAS TEA On December 5, from 12:00-2:00 p.m., join Westminster women at the Christmas Tea held in Parish Hall. Celebrate the festive season with a delicious lunch and Christmas music by the St. Andrew's Sisters. RSVP to the Church Office or sign up in the West Narthex.

JOINT SESSION AND DEACON MEETING will be **Wednesday, December 10 at 5:30 p.m.** in the Parish Hall. All currently serving and new elders and deacons are invited.

Advent at Westminster

First Sunday of Advent: November 30

Advent Wreath

We begin the Season of Advent, the time of waiting and preparing today with the lighting of the Advent Wreath. Thank you to the new members who will lead us in this Westminster tradition. An Introit will be presented each Sunday by our Advent Singers.

Second Sunday of Advent: December 7

Children's Choir sings during 10:00 a.m. service

Advent Celebration at 11:15 a.m. in Parish Hall

Third Sunday of Advent: December 14

Sacrament of Holy Communion will be served.

Fourth Sunday of Advent: December 21

Westminster's chancel and West Narthex will be filled with red poinsettias. Following the service the Board of Deacons will deliver the poinsettias to bereaved members.

Sunday School Procession during 10:00 a.m. service

Christmas Vespers at 4:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Westminster's Christmas Vespers program will be presented by Westminster Choir and the St. Andrew's Sisters, with Mu-Chi Hseih, Violin, and Dale Rogers, Organist.

Christmas Eve at Westminster ~ Wednesday, December 24

5:00 p.m. Children's Christmas Pageant The Confirmation youth and Bridges children will narrate the Christmas story in a costumed pageant with special music by the Children's Choir. All children are invited to participate as shepherds, angels, and lambs.

5:30 – 7:30 p.m. Annual Christmas Eve Dinner Hosted by the Board of Deacons Don't miss this special event which includes traditional Christmas dinner. Adults are $26.50, children 6-12 are $15.00 and children ages 5 and under are no charge. Reservations and payment must be made no later than Friday, December 19. Please send your payment and number attending to the Church Office or visit the reservation link on our website.

7:30 p.m. Service of Lessons and Carols The Westminster Choir will provide the choral music and our Senior High will read the Christmas Story in this Annual Service of Lessons and Carols. Dr. Marshall will give the meditation. In ancient times, the bells of churches were silenced during the season of Advent. Yet, at the singing of the angel's song, "Gloria in Excelsis Deo" the bells were rung. We follow that tradition by ringing bells during the singing of the closing carol.

THIS WEEK AT WESTMINSTER

Monday, December 1

9:00 AM Garden Club (Parish Hall)
4:00 PM Symphony Guild (2nd Floor Classroom)

Tuesday, December 2

10:30 AM Staff Meeting (Pastor's Study)
12:00 PM KDO Willing Circle (3rd Floor Classroom)
1:00 PM Knit 2 Purl 4 (2nd Floor Classroom)
3:00 PM Compass for Kids
5:15 PM Membership (Conference Room)
6:00 PM Adult Ed Committee (Library)
7:30 PM St. Andrews Sisters (Off site)

Wednesday, December 3

10:00 AM Pastors Pray in the Chancel
10:30 AM Worship Planning (Pastor's Study)
3:30 PM DBSA Group (3rd Floor Classroom)
4:00 PM Bridges (Tower Classroom)
5:00 PM Children's Choir (Music Room)
5:15 PM Family Ministry (Conference Room)
5:30 PM Mission and Community Service (2nd Floor Classroom)
6:30 PM D&D Group (Library)
7:00 PM Ruth and Naomi Circle (Off site)

Thursday, December 4

2:30 PM Memory Loss Group (2nd Floor Classroom)
4:30 PM Personnel Committee (Conference Room)
5:45 PM Thursday Night Bible Study (2nd Floor Clsrm)
7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal (Music Room)

Friday, December 5

12:00 PM Women's Christmas Tea (Parish Hall)

Saturday, December 6

Sunday, December 7

Parish Nurse Ministries (Church Office)

10:00 AM Worship Service (Sanctuary)
10:15 AM Sunday School (Pre-K- Grade 5) (3rd Floor Chapel and Classroom)
10:15 AM Confirmation Prep (Conference Room)
11:00 AM Advent Celebration (Parish Hall)
11:45 AM Youth Shop for Contact Ministries

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WESTMINSTER STAFF

The Reverend Dr. Anne Marshall
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

Dr. Aaron Berkowitz
Education Coordinator

Mary A. Ray
Director for Youth

Meleah Berkowitz
Director for Children's Ministry, Westminster Cooperative Preschool and Music Assistant

Keri Tate, Becky Nika
Cooperative Preschool Teachers

Kara Milward, Erin Winn
Nursery Coordinators

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, Francis Gyebi, Jerry McCullum
Part-time Custodians