WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Third Sunday of Advent
Communion Sunday
14 December 2025 + 10:00 a.m.

Welcome and Announcements

Voluntary Of Creator's Love Begotten 13th Century Plainsong

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 Third 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 Third Advent Candle is lit.)

***Processional Hymn 82** Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus *Hyfrydol*

***Unison Prayer of Confession**

**Lavish God, forgive us for expecting too little from you,
for settling for pale imitations of paradise,
for store-bought joy and hesitant faith.
Break open our timid hearts to dare to reach for the glory of your joyous, life-giving Kingdom. Amen.**

***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**

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 — Hymnal, Back Cover

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.

Following the Congregational Response, children in grades Pre K - 5 go to Sunday School. Grades 6-7 remain in worship for communion.

Prayer for Illumination

First Scripture Reading Isaiah 35:1-10 — Pew Bible, OT page 663

Second Scripture Reading Matthew 11:2-11 — Pew Bible, NT pages 11

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

Meditation Dreaming Up Joy — Rev. Dr. Anne C.S. Marshall

Anthem — Christmas Lullaby — John Rutter

Clear in the darkness a light shines in Bethlehem:
Angels are singing, their sound fills the air.
Wise men have journeyed to greet their Messiah;
But only a mother and baby are there.
Where are his courtiers, and who are his people?
Why does he bear neither sceptre nor crown?
Shepherds his courtiers, the poor for his people,
With peace as his sceptre and love as his crown.

The Presentation of Our Gifts and Prayer of Dedication

At this time all worshipers are invited to sign and pass the Ministry of Friendship folders at the end of each pew

Offertory — All Bells in Paradise — John Rutter

All bells in paradise I heard them ring,
Sounding in majesty the news that they bring;
All bells in paradise I heard them ring,
Welcoming our Savior, born on earth a heavenly king.
"Glory to God on high" the angel voices sing.

Offertory Response — Doxology — Hymnal, 606

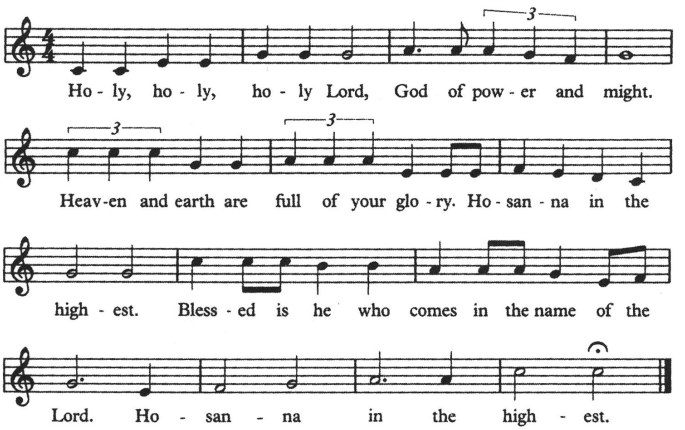
Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise God, all creatures here below
Praise God above, ye heavenly host
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Sacrament of Holy Communion

Invitation to the Lord's Table
Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

Pastor: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.
Pastor: Lift up your hearts.
People: We lift them to the Lord.
Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.
Pastor: Praise to you O God, who formed the mountains and filled the seas, who set the sun to rule the day and the moon to rule the night….Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with the heavenly choirs and with all the faithful of every time and place, who forever sing to the glory of your name:

The people sing:



Leader: In time you visited your people with a new word, a living word, a word made flesh to live among us…With thanksgiving we offer all that we are to you as a holy sacrifice, to be your servants, your light to shine for all the world.

Great is the mystery of faith:

People: **Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.**

Leader: Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these your gifts of bread and wine, that the bread we break and the cup we bless may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ…Let us now join together in the words that Jesus taught us to pray, saying…

The Lord's Prayer Hymnal, page 35

Words of Institution

Distribution of Elements *The elements are served without interruption. Partake of the bread as you receive it and hold the cup until all have been served so that we may symbolize our unity in Christ.*

Gluten-free bread is available in the center of the plate.

Communion Music

***Prayer after Communion**	Holy One, we have met you at this table. Nourished by your holy food, send us out as one people, full of vision and courage, to prepare the way for your kingdom. Filled with your grace, show us how to live so that all may know your hope, your peace, your joy, and your love. We pray in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, the divine Messiah, and Prince of Peace, Amen.	
***Hymn 87**	Comfort, Comfort Now My People	*Genevan 42*
***Charge and Benediction**		
Closing Response	Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming	Michael Praetorius
***Voluntary**	From Heaven Above to Earth I Come	Johann Pachelbel

(*) The congregation is invited to stand

SUNDAY AT WESTMINSTER

- **Chancel Flowers** are given in celebration of Rev. Sarah A. Bishop's first year anniversary of her call to Westminster Presbyterian Church as the Associate Pastor for Family Ministry by the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee
- **Sunday Liturgist:** Rev. Sarah A. Bishop
- **Advent Candle Lighters:** Willow Stallings and Cameron Hudgins
- **Greeter:** George Botanga
- **Acolytes:** Diana Choi and Rose DeJong
- **Cross and Bible Carriers:** Macklin Metzger and Nora Kennerly
- **Today's Communion Bread** is Swedish Limpa and was lovingly prepared Brad Swanson.
- **Elders Serving Communion:** Scott Day, Team Leader, Brownie Anderson, Jonathan Carlson-Eastvold, Tara Fritsch, Rachael Hickman, Vonnie Hinesley, David Jenkins, Judy Knox, Amanda Maddox-Wenthe, Julie McDonough, Christy Pound, Lyle VanDeventer
- **Communion Prep:** Mary Ray (Team Leader), Ann Collins, Elisabeth and Mark Luttrell, Leigh Milward, Krista Steller
- **Home Communion Delivery:** Melanie and Bud Green, Judy and Todd Knox, Mary Ray Marilyn Rigney, Lyle and Eleanor VanDeventer
- **Ushers:** Greg Boutelle (Head Usher). Todd Lafrenz, Claudia Nash, Bill Schlosser, Bernie Wiseman, Randy Wiseman, Cathy Yokley
- **Safety Team:** Todd Knox
- **Music:** The Westminster Choir and Dale Rogers, Organist
- **Liturgy** written by Rev. Carol Holbrook Prickett.

EDUCATION AND FELLOWSHIP THIS SUNDAY

- **9:45 a.m. – 12 noon Infants, toddlers, and two-year-olds (Nursery)** gather for play and Bible Story. *Caregiver: Kara Milward*
- **10:00 – 11:00 a.m. Children in Pre-K – Grade 5** begin in worship & go to Sunday school following the Congregational Response. Youth in Grades 6 – 7 remain in worship.
  - **Preschool - Ages 3-5 (Preschool Classroom lower level)** *Teachers: Leigh Milward, Rose DeJong*
  - **Kindergarten - Grade 2 (Third Floor Chapel)** *Teachers: Meleah Berkowitz, Lindsay Boutelle*
  - **Grades 3-5 (Third Floor Classroom)** *Teacher: Aaron Berkowitz*
- **11:15 a.m. – Noon**
  - **Confirmation (Conference Room)** Students in Grade 8 will study Session 8: "Martin Luther Protests" *Teachers: Dr. Marshall and Mary Ray*
- **11:15 a.m. Adult Ed Forum: "Regional Ministry in Asheville** Join Westminster youth and Rev. Bishop as they share their summer mission journey to Asheville.
- **5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. Senior High Youth Group (Off site)** Youth and mentors are invited to Lily Swanson's home (2201 Augusta) to enjoy a festive dinner and white elephant gift exchange (max $15).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WE WELCOME VISITORS! Information about who we are is 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, speak to Dr. Marshall or Rev. Bishop.

H.E.A.L. FUND provides "helpful emergency assistance for living" to members of the Springfield community through Contact Ministries and within our church family as needed. Donations are needed and can be placed in the offering plate or made online. This fund is highlighted on Communion Sundays.

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**.

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 give to 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 On Thursday, Gary Warnick, assisted by members of Men's Breakfast group delivered gifts for nine families living in the Contact Ministries transitional shelter. Thanks to Westminster members and friends for your generous support.

LYDIA CIRCLE will meet Tuesday, December 16 at Noon for a Christmas luncheon in Parish Hall. Please RSVP to Nancy Canady at 217-899-9890.

JUNIOR HIGH CHRISTMAS PARTY (Youth Room) on Wednesday, December 17 from 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Our Junior High Youth will gather in the youth room for a Christmas party with dinner, games and white elephant gift exchange (max $15).

SENIOR HIGH YOUTH REHEARSAL on Wednesday, December 17 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary for A Service of Lessons and Carols

PAGEANT REHEARSAL SUNDAY SCHOOL Sunday, December 21: 11:00 A.M. Christmas Pageant Rehearsal in the Sanctuary. Children participating in the Christmas Pageant on December 24 are invited to a rehearsal for this traditional part of our families' Christmas worship.

Advent at Westminster

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT: DECEMBER 14

An Introit will be presented by our Advent Singers.

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. Music of Sir John Rutter will be featured.

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 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 or sign up in the West Narthex following the service today.

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 15

Tuesday, December 16
10:30 AM Staff Meeting (Conference Room)
12:00 PM Lydia Circle Christmas Luncheon (Parish Hall)
1:00 PM Knit 2, Purl 4 Mission (2nd Floor Classroom)
3:00 PM Compass for Kids
6:00 PM WCP Board Meeting (Zoom)
7:30 PM St. Andrews' Sisters rehearsal (Offsite)

Wednesday, December 17
10:00 AM Pastors Pray in Chancel (Sanctuary)
10:30 AM Worship Planning (Pastor's Study)
3:30 PM DBSA Group (3rd Floor Classroom)
4:30 PM Children of Abraham (Sanctuary)
5:15 PM Bridges & Children's Choir Caroling (IPH)
5:30 PM Jr. High Youth Christmas Party (Youth Room)
7:00 PM Sr. High Christmas Eve Practice (Sanctuary)

Thursday, December 18
12:00 PM Library Guild – Day Session (Children's Library)
12:00 PM Staff Christmas Party (Off site)
6:00 PM Library Guild – Evening Session (Children's Library))
7:00 PM Westminster Choir (Music Room)

Friday, December 19
5:00 PM Food Not Bombs Meal Prep (Kitchen)

Saturday, December 20
9:30 AM Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
12:00 PM Food Not Bombs Meal Prep (Kitchen)

Sunday, December 21
10:00 AM Worship Service (Sanctuary)
10:15 AM Confirmation Prep (Conference Room)
10:15 AM Sunday School Pre K to Grade 5 (Chapel/Tower)
11:00 AM Children's Nativity Practice (Sanctuary)
11:00 AM Fair Trade Sale (West Narthex)
11:15 AM Adult Ed Forum Parish Hall)
11:15 AM College Age Brunch (Off site)
4:00 PM Christmas Vespers (Sanctuary)
5:00 PM Choir Dinner (Parish Hall)

Westminster Presbyterian Church
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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