



WESTMINSTER  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
Communion Sunday  
Second Sunday of Easter  
12 April 2026 + 10:00 a.m.

Welcome and Announcements

**Ministry Moment** Youth Mission Trip – Trivia Night Mark Luttrell and  
Aaron Berkowitz

**Voluntary** Good Christians, All Rejoice and Sing Healey Willan

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

**\*Call to Worship** (adapted from *Balloons Belong in Church*)

**Leader:** I took to church one morning a happy four-year-old boy. Holding a bright blue string to which was attached his much-loved orange balloon with pink stripes, certainly a thing of beauty. And, if not forever, at least a joy for a very important now. When later he met me at the door, clutching blue string, orange and pink bobbing behind him, he didn't have to tell me something had gone wrong.

**People:** "What's the matter?" He wouldn't tell me. "I bet they loved your balloon..."

**Leader:** Out it came then, mocking the teacher's voice: "we don't bring balloons to church." Then that little four-year-old, his lip a bit trembly asked: Why aren't balloons allowed in church? I thought God would like balloons."

**People:** We celebrate balloons, parades, and chocolate chip cookies. We celebrate seashells and elephants and lions that roar. We celebrate roasted marshmallows and chocolate cake and fresh fish. We celebrate aromas: bread baking, bacon, lemons. We celebrate seeing: bright colors, wheat in a field, wildflowers. We celebrate hearing: waves pounding, rain falling, soft voices. We celebrate touching: toes in the sand, a kitten's fur, another person.

**Leader:** We celebrate the sun that shines slap dab in our faces. We celebrate sunrises and the wonderous quiet of sunsets. We celebrate the crashing thunder and the brazen lightning.

**All:** We celebrate the green of the world, the life-giving green, the hope-giving green. And we celebrate birth: the wonder, the miracle of that tiny life already asserting selfhood. We celebrate with joy the raising of our Lord Jesus Christ from death to new life. Alleluia!

**\*Processional Hymn 238**

Thine is the Glory

*Judas Maccabeus*

**\*Unison Prayer of Confession**

God of joy, we come to you as a people hungry for good news, yet we've hidden in shadowed and locked rooms. We get too uncomfortable with the sorrow and grief of others, that we doubt your transformative words may need our lips. We don't smile and laugh as much as we should, as is befitting those who have been gifted with the Good News of Jesus Christ. Restore to us the joy of our salvation, we humbly ask. In Christ's name, we pray.

**\*Silent Confession**

*During this silence, worshipers are asked to offer individual prayers of confession.*

**\*Sung Response**

Lord Have Mercy

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** Alleluia, Alleluia! Give Thanks Donald Fishel  
Alleluia, alleluia! Give thanks to the risen Lord.  
Alleluia, alleluia! Give praise to his name. *(repeat twice)*

*Following the response, children in Pre-Kindergarten–Grade 5 will go to their Sunday school classes and youth in Grades 6-7 remain in worship to participate in Communion.*

## Prayer for Illumination

**Scripture Reading** John 20:19-31 Pew Bible, NT pages 114,115  
Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.  
**People: Thanks be to God.**

**Meditation** “To Share In The Joy” Rev. Sarah A. Bishop

**Anthem** That Easter Day with Joy was Bright Dale Wood  
*The text for the anthem is page 254 in the hymnal.*

**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** O Lord, You Are My God and King C.H.H. Parry  
*The text for the offertory anthem is page 270 in the hymnal*

## 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: It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise...Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with choirs of angels and with all the faithful of every time and place, who forever sing to the glory of your name:

*The people sing:*

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might.  
Heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the  
high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the  
Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Leader: You are holy, O God of majesty...Accept this, our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving as a living and holy offering of ourselves, that our lives may proclaim the One crucified and risen. 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...  
Hear now the prayer Christ 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.*

### \*Prayer after Communion

Gracious God, we give you thanks that by the witness of your word and the sharing of this meal you have opened our hearts and eyes to the presence of Christ among us. Now send us forth from this place by the power of your Spirit to tell this good news to the world: The Lord has risen indeed! Amen

### \*Hymn 611

Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee

*Hymn to Joy*

### \*Charge and Benediction

**Responsive Litany** (adapted from *Balloons Belong in Church*)

Leader: Bring your balloons and your butterflies, your bouquets of flowers, bring the torches and hold them high! Dance your dances, paint your feelings, sing your songs, whistle, and laugh.

People: **Life is a celebration, an affirmation of God's love.  
Life is distributing more balloons.**

All: **For God so loved the world, surely that is a cause for joy. Surely, we should celebrate! Good news! That God loves us so much. Where did we ever get the idea that balloons don't belong in church? Amen**

### Closing Response

Amen

William Smith

(\*) The congregation is invited to stand

THOSE WHO WOULD LIKE TO DONATE TO WESTMINSTER MINISTRIES  
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Westminster Presbyterian Church

533 S. Walnut St. Springfield, Illinois 62704

Phone (217) 522-4415 <http://www.wpcspi.org>

**Balloons Belong In Church -poem by Ann Weems**



Scan this QR code to read the entire Ann Weem's poem.

## SERVING THIS SUNDAY AT WESTMINSTER

- **Sunday Liturgist:** Sue Sawers
- **Worship Leader:** Taryn Barnett
- **Acolytes:** Connor and Lily Hill
- **Bible and Cross Carriers:** Charlotte Affrunti and Sam Batterman
- **Today's Communion Bread** was lovingly prepared by Brad Swanson
- **Elders Serving Communion:** Vonnie Hinesley (Team Leader), Brownie Anderson, George Botanga, Jonathan Carlson-Eastvold, Tara Fritsch, David Jenkins, Lucy Stafford, Brad Swanson, Lyle VanDeventer, Jess Weitzel, Brinton Wilkey
- **Communion Prep:** Ann Collins, Pricilla and Tim Kluge, Elisabeth and Mark Luttrell, Leigh Milward, Mary Ray, Marilyn Rigney, Krista Steller.
- **Home Communion Delivery:** Melanie & Bud Green, Judy & Todd Knox, Marilyn Rigney, Sue Sawers, Krista & Brad Steller, and Brinton Wilkey
- **Greeters:** Richard Leary
- **Ushers:** Dorothy Hutchinson-Gross (Head Usher), Julie Barton, Deb Fritsch, Brad Steller, Maud Essel Addo-Yobo, John Addo-Yobo, Lisa Metzger, Mack Metzger
- **Safety Team:** Todd Knox
- **Music:** The Westminster Choir, Dale Rogers, Organist
- **Videographers:** Bill Deemer, Krista Steller

## 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: God is Pleased with You, Too (Jesus is Baptized) *Caregiver: Erin Winn*
  - **10:00 – 11:00 a.m. Children in Pre-K – Grade 5** begin in worship & go to Sunday school.
  - **Preschool - Ages 3-5 (Preschool Classroom lower level)** This week's story: Disciples Follow Jesus (Jesus Calls Disciples) *Teacher: Leigh Milward*
  - **Kindergarten - Grade 2 (Third Floor Chapel)** This week's story: The Peace of Christ (John 20:19-31) *Teacher: Meleah Berkowitz*
  - **Grades 3-5 (Third Floor Classroom)** This week's story: Faith Blooms (John 20:19-31) *Teacher: Aaron Berkowitz*
- **11:00 a.m. Congregational Meeting**

- **11:15 a.m. – Noon Adult Ed Forum (Parish Hall)** Briley Tuttle joins us from Rooted in Springfield, a nonprofit inspired by the vision of Emma Shafer, a Westminster confirmand who passed away in 2023 at the age of 24. Rooted works to address inequitable food access on Springfield's East Side by bridging the physical and financial gap between where food is grown and where it is consumed. Briley will share Rooted's mission through the lens of her background in therapeutic horticulture.
- **5:00 p.m. – TONIGHT is our Trivia Night Mission Trip Fundraiser** There is still time to join the youth for a fun night of trivia supporting our Youth Mission Trip 2026 to Charleston, SC. Team sign-ups can be done online by scanning the QR code or tonight. Childcare is available in the nursery. **Questions begin at 5:30 p.m.** We welcome Aaron Berkowitz and Mark Luttrell who will create and present the questions.



**DINNER IS \$5.00** and available for purchase at 5:00 p.m. thanks to Pat Hymans and her kitchen team. Participants are welcome to bring snacks and non-alcoholic drinks.

**TICKETS are \$20.00** and can be purchased on our website or purchased tonight at a table in the West Narthex.

**SEVEN ROUNDS OF SEVEN QUESTIONS** with a bonus question each round. Tables who purchase a **helium balloon for \$20** are invited to participate in the bonus question. The winning table will receive half of the funds raised through the purchase of the balloons.

**RAFFLE TICKETS** will be sold at the door. One for \$5 or three for \$10. Gift certificates to Springfield restaurants will be presented to a winning ticket between rounds.

**RED AND GREEN PADDLES** can be purchased at the door for \$10. In between rounds four and five, those who purchased paddles will participate in a yes (green) – no (red) special trivia. The winner will receive half of the funds raised through the purchase of the paddles.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**WE WELCOME VISITORS!** Information about us is in our Welcome Brochure located in the pew pockets and on our website [www.wpcspi.org](http://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.

**CONGREGATIONAL MEETING** A brief congregational meeting will be held **TODAY, April 12<sup>th</sup> at the end of the worship service** for the purpose of nominating Elders Christy Pound to fulfill an unexpired term for the class of 2026, Cathy Brower for an unexpired term for the class of 2028, and Willow Stallings as Deacon for an unexpired term for the class of 2027.

**STEADFAST NEIGHBOR SERVICE WEEK: JUNE 22-26** Mark your calendars for our 7<sup>th</sup> annual neighborhood outreach, taking place from **June 22-26**. We invite members and friends to join us for one or more days as we serve our neighbors through helping them with projects to improve their properties. There are a variety of ways you can help, even if you are not able to do heavy lifting or be out in the heat. Stay posted for sign-ups which will be shared in our e-news and on our website later in April. Local homeowners have been invited to participate in our annual service week and/or apply for a matching grant up to \$1,500 toward simple property



improvements, especially addressing certain needs such as safety, security, and energy efficiency upgrades. These applications will be reviewed by the Steadfast Neighbor Mission Outreach Team before participating in site visits in May. Serving on this team are: Dr. Todd Knox, Chair, Keith Hamilton, Tim Kluge, Bob Leffler, Tom Owen, Julie Robbs, and Pete Van Gieson.

**ELIZABETH CIRCLE** meets on **Monday, April 13 at 1:00 p.m.** in the Second Floor Classroom. Sue Sawers will lead Lesson 9 in *Finding Resilience, Joy and Our Identity in Jesus Christ* by The Rev. Dr. Rhashell D. Hunter.

**DINNER CELEBRATING OUR CONFIRMANDS** will be held **Wednesday, April 15 at 7:15 p.m.** in Parish Hall, following the 6:15 p.m. presentation to Session.

**DUNGEONS & DRAGONS** A group of intrepid adventurers have been meeting with Dungeon Master Aaron Berkowitz on the **1st and 3rd Wednesday (April 1st and 15th) at 6:30 p.m.** in the Ziegler Library to explore the 1st century AD ancient Near East. They recently finished a quest in ancient Nineveh and Teredon inspired by the deuterocanonical Book of Tobit. They also acquired their own ship and are sailing around the Arabian Peninsula. In March, they passed through the Strait of Hormuz! If you are interested in joining in, contact Aaron at [berkowitz@wpcspi.org](mailto:berkowitz@wpcspi.org).

**THURSDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY** will meet on **Thursdays from 5:45 to 6:45 p.m.** in the Second Floor Classroom. Eleanor and Lyle VanDeventer are continuing the Thursday Night Bible Study tradition. The source for the class will be "*A is for Alabaster*," a book of fifty-two reflections on the stories of Scripture by renowned Presbyterian Minister and Professor of Preaching at Columbia Theological Seminary, the Rev. Dr. Anna Carter Florence.

**DMA (Don't Mention Age)** meets on **Friday, April 17, with a potluck at 5:30 p.m., then a program that starts at 6:15 p.m.** Bring a side to share with others. Gil Opferman will be here to preview the 2026 Muni season with a program called "The Muni Opera can change your life!" An RSVP is suggested but not required. Go to the WPC website under fellowship or by calling the church office. If you should find yourself with time to attend and did not call or email, please come.

**ADULT EDUCATION FORUM THE SPIRITUALITY OF GARDENING** – On **April 19**, Dr. Scott Day will present on plants referenced in the Bible and their medicinal and culinary uses. Led by Dr. Katie Carlson-Eastvold and guests. This forum meets at **11:15 a.m.** in Parish Hall following worship.

**LYDIA CIRCLE** meets on **Tuesday, April 21 at 9:30 a.m.** in the Ziegler Library. Lesson 7 in *Finding Resilience, Joy and Our Identity in Jesus Christ* by The Rev. Dr. Rhashell D. Hunter will be discussed.

**JUNIOR HIGH YOUTH GROUP** Junior High youth meet **Wednesday, April 22 from 5:30-7:00 p.m.** in the Youth Room for a deeper study of Stories of Hope from the Old Testament, games and a meal together. Thank you Kelly Robertson for preparing the meal. Leaders: Rev. Sarah Bishop, Aaron Berkowitz, Cathy Brower, Tara Fritsch, and Mary Ray.

**CELEBRATION OF LIFE HONORING BETSY RUKLICK** will be held on **Thursday, April 23 at 2:30 p.m.** in the IL Presbyterian Home Dining Room at 2005 W. Lawrence.

**SPRINGFIELD EARTH AWARENESS FAIR IS Saturday, April 25, 11:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m.**

The Earth Care Team will host a table again this year at the Union Square Park (500 E. Madison St.) by Union Station. Westminster has been recertified for the eleventh year by the Presbyterian Church (USA) as an Earth Care Congregation. The Earth Care Team consists of Keith Hamilton and Susan Shaw, Co-Chairs, Charlie King, Dr. Todd Lafrenz, Lynn McMenamin, Maribeth Norton, Andy Sherrick, Jack Sherrick and Brad Steller.



**YOUTH SUNDAY is April 26.** Come out to support our youth who will lead worship at the **10:00 a.m.** service. This year's theme is **Remember God's Plan** based on Luke 24:13-25. Seniors Ben Bassett and Liam Kizely will present reflections on the text. Junior and Senior High youth will serve as liturgists and present special music.

**SENIOR HIGH YOUTH GROUP** Senior High Youth Group will have their next gathering **April 26 from 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.** in Parish Hall to celebrate a job well done on Youth Sunday. Thank you to Rev. Sarah for providing the meal.

**PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN COLLECTING LAYETTE ITEMS during April and May.** Place items in the box located in the West Narthex near the elevator. Items for infants 3-18 months will be donated to Kumler Outreach Ministries. If you shop online, items may be shipped directly to the church.

**POKEMON CLUB** meets on **Sunday, April 26, from 12:30-2:00 p.m.** with Aaron Berkowitz in the Children's Library. All children and the young at heart are welcome. No experience necessary and all supplies will be on hand.

**ADULT ED FORUM -- Mission Study Update and Congregational Roundtable. On April 26** Join Pastor Anne and members of the Strategic Planning Team as they share insights from the first phase of our Mission Study Process. There will be time for conversation and collecting your questions, feedback, and hopes for the church as we determine next steps for continuing our mission study. Led by Rev. Dr. Anne C.S. Marshall. This forum meets at **11:15 a.m.** in Parish Hall following worship.

**APOSTLES' READ LIBRARY BOOK GROUP Tuesday, April 28** The Apostles' Read Library Book Group meets **Tuesday, April 28 from 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.** in the Ziegler Library to discuss Constantine's Sword: The Church and the Jews – A History by James Carroll. New members are always welcome! Led by Dr. Aaron Berkowitz

**CONFIRMATION SUNDAY, MAY 3** The Class of 2026 will be recognized and commissioned during the 10:00 a.m. worship service. This is a time of celebration and a milestone on the faith journeys of our youth: **Lucy Elisabeth Bassett, Harper Ryann Huston, Reese Anne Huston, Lily Grace Swanson.** Each youth will receive a Common English Bible which is a gift from Westminster. The Congregational Fellowship Committee of the Board of Deacons will host a reception honoring the Confirmands following worship. *Thank you to those who served as mentors to our confirmands: Melanie Green, Christy Pound, Dee Dee Duffy and Katie Carlson-Eastvold.*



**CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM** will meet on **Wednesday, May 6, 4:30 p.m.** at Springfield Art Association, (700 N 4th St)). for our last gathering in the 2025-2026 program year. We will be completing our art project on our theme “Strength in Diversity.” This interfaith fellowship for children and youth was initiated in the Fall of 2016 and meets quarterly to promote friendship and share in service.

**THIRD GRADE BIBLE PRESENTATION** will be **Sunday, May 10** during worship. Each third grader will receive a NRSV Spark Bible with an engraved name plate on the cover. Third graders receiving Bibles include: **Juniper Ann Berkowitz, Jami’ona Semjza Capler, and Brice Bradford Knoedler.** The Children’s Choir will sing.

**FOUNDERS’ SUNDAY IS MAY 17!** Join us for **worship at 10:00 a.m.** followed by a light reception in Parish Hall as we celebrate Dale Rogers’ 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as Director of Music and the Arts at Westminster. Music has been a rich part of Westminster’s heritage and this year as we celebrate Founders’ Sunday we will also celebrate the important role Dale has played in nurturing our music ministry and drawing the congregation into a spirit of worship.

**BACCALAUREATE SUNDAY, JUNE 7,** we recognize graduating high school seniors during the 10:00 a.m. service. A reception in their honor will be held in Parish Hall following worship. All Westminster graduates (high school, college, and graduate school) will be listed in the June 7 bulletin and the June newsletter. Please contact Jennie Alt ([jalt@wpcspi.org](mailto:jalt@wpcspi.org)) with information by Friday, May 29.



**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL, MONDAY JUNE 8 - FRIDAY JUNE 12** Join us in our community garden, with **Just Like Me VBS.** Registration for children gardeners and adult and youth guides opening soon on our website. Mark your calendar now!

**THE WOMEN OF WESTMINSTER ARE INVITED  
TO A GARDEN PARTY IN PARISH HALL**

**SATURDAY, MAY 16 AT 10:00 - 11:30 A.M.**

**HOSTED BY THE RUTH AND NAOMI CIRCLE**

**RSVP at [wpcspi.org](http://wpcspi.org) or with [jalt@wpcspi.org](mailto:jalt@wpcspi.org)**



## THIS WEEK AT WESTMINSTER

### Monday, April 13

- 1:00 PM Elizabeth Circle (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Classroom)
- 3:30 PM Personnel (Pastor's Study)
- 5:30 PM Strategic Planning (Conference Room)

### Tuesday, April 14

- 10:30 AM Staff Meeting (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Classroom)
- 1:00 AM Knit 2 Purl 4 (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Classroom)
- 5:00 PM Food Not Bombs Meal Prep (Kitchen)
- 7:30 PM St. Andrews Sisters (Off-Site 1)

### Wednesday, April 15

- 9:00 AM Food Not Bombs Meal Prep (Kitchen)
- 10:00 AM Pastors Pray in the Chancel (Chancel)
- 10:30 AM Worship Planning (Pastor's Study)
- 3:30 PM DBSA Group (3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Classroom)
- 4:00 PM Bridges (Tower Classroom)
- 5:00 PM Children's Choir (Music Room)
- 5:30 PM Session (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Classroom)
- 6:15 PM Confirmands meet with Session
- 6:30 PM Dungeon's and Dragons (Library)
- 7:15 PM Confirmation Dinner (Parish Hall)

### Thursday, April 16

- 12:00 PM Library Guild-Day Work Session (Children's Library)
- 4:00 PM WPC Pastor at IL Presb Home (Off-Site 1)
- 5:45 PM Thursday Night Bible Study (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Class)
- 6:00 PM Library Guild-Evening Work Session (Children's Library)
- 7:00 PM Choir (Music Room)

### Friday, April 17

- 5:30 PM DMA Potluck (Parish Hall)
- 6:15 PM DMA Program (Parish Hall)

### Saturday, April 18

- 1:30 PM Andy Smith's 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday Open House (Parish Hall)

### Sunday, April 19

- 10:00 AM Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 10:15 AM Confirmation Prep (Conference Room)
- 10:15 AM Sunday School (Pre-K- Grade 5)  
(3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Chapel and Classroom)
- 11:00 AM Fair Trade Sale
- 11:15 AM Adult Ed Forum (Parish Hall)

## 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

**Sue Sawers, CRE**  
Interim Care Coordinator

**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

**Pat Hymans**  
Hospitality Coordinator

**Lisa Runkle**  
Financial Administrator

**Jennie Alt**  
Church Administrative Assistant

**Gary Warnick**  
Building and Property Manager

**Braden Barton, James Capler,  
Terry Gietl, Francis Gyebi,  
Jerry McCullum**  
Part-time Custodians