WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Twelfth Sunday After Pentecost
Blessing of the Backpacks
16 August 2026 + 10:00 a.m.

Welcome and Announcements

Voluntary Fantasy in G — J. S. Bach

***Ringing of the Bell**

***Call to Worship**

Leader: We are called to love the Lord our God.
People: We are called to love with all our heart and soul.
Leader: We are called to love the Lord our God.
People: We are called to love with all our mind and strength.
Leader: We are called to love the Lord our God.
People: And we are called to love our neighbor as ourselves.
Leader: Come, let us love our God and share God's love in this time of worship!

***Processional Hymn 63** The Lord is God — *Azmon*

***Unison Prayer of Confession**

Almighty God, you love us, but we have not loved you. You call, but we have not listened. We walk away from neighbors in need, wrapped in our own concerns. We condone evil, prejudice, warfare, and greed.
God of grace, help us to admit our sin, so that as you come to us in mercy, we may repent, turn to you, and receive forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our redeemer. 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 Message Blessing of the Backpacks

Following the response, children in Pre-Kindergarten–Grade 5 will go to their Sunday school classes.

Congregational Response Listen, Listen, God is Calling — Neno Lake Mungu

Listen, listen, God is calling, through the Word inviting,
offering forgiveness, comfort, and joy. (Repeat three times)

Prayer of Illumination

First Scripture Reading Deuteronomy 6:4-18 — Pew Bible, OT pages 163-164

Second Scripture Reading Matthew 22:34-40 — Pew Bible, NT page 25

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

Sermon The Rule of Love — Rev. Anne C. S. Marshall

Special Music His Eye is On the Sparrow — Traditional

Sung by Diane Dietz

***Affirmation of Faith** — The Confession of 1967, inclusive language ed.

God's sovereign love is a mystery beyond the reach of the human mind. Human thought ascribes to God superlatives of power, wisdom, and goodness. But God reveals divine love in Jesus Christ by showing power in the form of a servant, wisdom in the folly of the cross, and goodness in receiving sinful men and women. The power of God's love in Christ to transform the world discloses that the Redeemer is the Lord and Creator who made all things to serve the purpose of God's love. Amen.

The Church at Prayer

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

Prayers of the People and The Lord's Prayer — Hymnal, page 35

The Presentation of Our Gifts *At this time all worshipers are asked to sign and pass the Ministry of Friendship folders at the end of each pew.*

Offertory O God, Thou Faithful God — 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** God of Abundance, we have received blessings from you and today we hear your call to share our time, our talent and our treasure with your beloved community. May these gifts bring your light, love and hope to all who need them. Amen.

***Hymn 286** Breathe on Me, Breath of God *Trentham*

***Charge and Benediction**

***Voluntary** Toccata J. S. Bach

(*) The congregation is invited to stand.

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

Westminster Presbyterian Church

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Phone (217) 522-4415 Fax (217) 522-4465

http://www.wpcspi.org

SERVING THIS SUNDAY AT WESTMINSTER

- **Sunday Liturgist:** Rev. Sarah A. Bishop
- **Worship Leader:** Kate Bryans
- **Acolytes:** Sam Berkowitz and Caroline Bryans
- **Greeters:** Mark and Elisabeth Luttrell
- **Safety Team:** Charlie King
- **Ushers:** Joyce King (Head Usher), Kyle Duffy, Linda Caupert, Ben Arnold, Michella Arnold, Chelsea Ekstedt, Andrew Affrunti, Pete Sherman
- **Music:** Linda Andrews, Organist
- **Videographers and Sound**: Bill Deemer, Krista Steller

EDUCATION AND FELLOWSHIP THIS SUNDAY AT WESTMINSTER

- **9:00 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. Sunday School Teacher/Ministry Partner Orientation** – Sunday school teachers for Pre-K through Grade 5, Pre-Confirmation, members of the Nursery Guild and Youth Group Ministry Partners will meet in Parish Hall for orientation and mandatory reporter training for the 2026-2027 program year.
- **9:45 a.m. – 12 noon Infants, toddlers, and two-year-olds (Nursery)** gather for play and Bible Story. *Caregiver: Erin Winn*
- **10:00 – 11:00 a.m. Children in Pre-K – Grade 5** begin in worship & go to Sunday school following the Congregational Response. Summer Sunday School is in session! Our children will continue to learn in their respective classrooms with the Frolic Preschool and elementary students will have special lessons on baptism and communion.
  - **Preschool – Grade 2 (Third Floor Chapel)** *Teachers: Meleah Berkowitz & Rose DeJong*
  - **Grade 3 – Grade 5 (Third Floor Tower Room)** *Teacher: Aaron Berkowitz*
- **Blessing of the Backpacks – At the Ministry Moment in today's service** the children, and youth of Westminster are invited to bring their backpacks down front to receive a blessing as they begin a new school year. Along with a blessing, each will receive a monogrammed carabiner with a Bible verse for their backpack as a reminder of God's loving presence on their journey throughout this school year.
- **11:15 a.m. Fair Trade Sale –** Melanie Green and DL Stanfield will be in the West Narthex after worship with fairly traded products from Equal Exchange. We have ordered fresh chocolate, coffee, and other goodies. Come check out a few new coffee blends/flavors.

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 at the end of each pew. If you are interested in joining Westminster, speak with one of the pastors.

ALL CHURCH BOOK READ -- *Love Your Neighbor* books are now available in the West Narthex (on Sundays) or the Church Office (during the week).

THANK YOU! Thank you to everyone who donated backpacks in person or mailed them to the church, and for the monetary donations. This Summer **we have collected 267** backpacks for children served by Contact Ministries! Last year we collected 175.

KNIT 2 PURL 4 MISSION AND FELLOWSHIP gathers every Tuesday at **1:00 p.m**. in the Second Floor Classroom. Summer is a good time to begin knitting colder weather items for children and adults. We will collect knitted hats, scarves and mittens in late fall and for the Mitten Tree. If there are extreme heat warnings, we encourage people to knit from home out of an abundance of caution. Watch for emails from Mary Jo for any cancellations or contact her at 217-622-8657 with questions. Knitters of any skill level are welcome.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS A group of intrepid adventurers will meet with Dungeon Master Aaron Berkowitz on **Wednesday, August 19 at 6:30 p.m.** in the Ziegler Library to explore Alexandria, Egypt and prepare for a cruise on a pleasure ship (where nothing bad will happen, I'm sure). If you are interested in joining in, contact Aaron Berkowitz at aberkowtiz@wpcspi.org

SPLASH INTO THE NEW YEAR! YOUNG FAMILY GATHERING – On Friday, August 21, from 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m., young families (parents and children ages birth – grade five) are invited to a swim party at the home of Judy and Todd Knox (2004 Maryknoll Place, Springfield) as we splash into a new year together. Please bring a towel and a dish to share! Friends are welcome and encouraged.

DMA (Don't Mention Age) meets on the third Fridays in the months of March through November with a potluck at **5:30,** and program at **6:15 p.m.** Bring a side to share with others. On **Friday, August 21,** we are pleased to welcome Mike Metz & Zach Eymann, members of the local "Fairweather Friends" band. Join us on this hot summer night to listen to a combination of guitar, vocals, harmonicas, and to listen to musical tunes that will make you want to tap your toes or get up and dance. They will play a mix of acoustic favorites, classic rock, blues, country, and other feel-good tunes from the past and present. This is definitely the DMA you want to attend! An RSVP is not required, but helpful. 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!

FAIRWEATHER FRIENDS
MIKE METZ

POKEMON CLUB The Pokémon Club meets with Aaron Berkowitz on **Sunday, August 23, from 12:30-2:00 p.m.** in the Second Floor Classroom. All children and the young at heart are welcome. No experience necessary and all supplies will be on hand.

COLLEGE AGE BRUNCH SUNDAY -- All college-age youth are invited to catch up with friends over brunch with Rev. Bishop and Mary Ray on **Sunday, August 23 at 11:30 a.m.** Plan to meet Mary in the West Narthex following worship, or you can meet the group at Boone's.

APOSTLES' READ LIBRARY BOOK GROUP -- The Apostles' Read Library Book Group meets on the fourth Tuesday of **August 25 from 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.** in the Ziegler Library to discuss the August book, *Night Flyer* by Tiya Miles. New members are always welcome! Led by Dr. Aaron Berkowitz.

WESTMINSTER GATHERING AT CONCORDIA -- Members and friends of Westminster will gather **Thursday, August 27, at 11:30 a.m.** with the pastors and the director of music and the arts, for communion followed by lunch.

SAVE THE DATE for the All Church Picnic! Sunday, September 13

- Dress casually for worship and stay for fellowship!
- Indoor and outdoor seating will be available for the meal or bring a lawn chair to watch the festivities outside.
- A Flu Shot Clinic will be in the Church Office. And information will be available about our new Church App.
- Westminster's Membership Committee will provide chicken tenders.
- Our church families with last names beginning with A-M bring a side or salad to share.
- Families with last names beginning with N-Z bring a dessert.

THIS WEEK AT WESTMINSTER

Monday, August 17

Tuesday, August 18

1:00 PM Knit 2 Purl 4 (2nd Floor Classroom)
5:00 PM Food Not Bombs Meal Prep (Kitchen)

Wednesday, August 19

9:00 AM Food Not Bombs Meal Prep (Kitchen)
10:30 AM Worship Planning (Pastor's Study)
3:30 PM DBSA Group (3rd Floor Classroom)
5:30 PM Session (2nd Floor Classroom)
6:30 PM D & D Group (Library)

Thursday, August 20

12:00 PM Library Guild-day Work Session (Children's Library)
6:00 PM Library Guild-evening Work Session (Children's Library)

Friday, August 21

5:30 PM DMA Potluck (Parish Hall)
5:30 PM Splash Into the New Year Young Family Gathering (Off-Site)
6:15 PM DMA Program (Parish Hall)

Saturday, August 22

Sunday, August 23

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

9:10 AM New Member Session (Library)
10:00 AM Worship Service-Receive New Members (Sanctuary)
10:15 AM Summer Sunday School Pre K-5 (Chapel)
11:30 AM College Age Brunch (Off-Site)
12:30 PM Pokémon Club (2nd Floor Classroom)

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, Terry Gietl, Jerry McCullum
Part-time Custodians