

Westminster Presbyterian Church

2025 Christmas Eve Service



December 24, 2025

4 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Please silence your cell phones prior to entering the sanctuary.

†Those who feel comfortable standing may do so.

**Denotes hymn number in pew hymnal. Some lyrics may differ from what is projected on the screens*

DISCIPLES GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD

PRELUDE

SETH CUNNINGHAM

WELCOME

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

Reader: In a fearful world, where do you see the presence of God?

We see God's fingerprints all around us. We see God in the beauty of the stars. We see God in the love of this community. We see God in the dreams we hold for a better world.

Reader: You are right. Even in a fearful world, God is here. God is all around us.

On this holy night, we light the Christ Candle as a reminder of this good news. May this flicker of light help us remember that even in a fearful world, God's love is all around us.

Reader: Thanks be to God for a love like that! Amen.

†**CALL TO WORSHIP**

On this holy night, we come,
dazzled and awe-struck, ready to sing alongside the angels.

On this holy night, we come,
eager and hopeful, ready to journey alongside the shepherds.

On this holy night, we come,
quietly and tenderly, ready to worship alongside Mary.

On this holy night, we come,
singing, trusting, believing, proclaiming: good news is louder than fear.

Let us worship our good news, with-us God.

*O come, all ye faithful,
joyful and triumphant;
O come ye; O come ye to Bethlehem!
Come, and behold him,
born the King of angels!
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him,
Christ, the Lord!*

*Sing, choirs of angels;
sing in exultation;
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all
glory in the highest!
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him,
Christ, the Lord!*

*Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father,
now in flesh appearing!
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him,
Christ, the Lord!*

CALL TO CONFESSION

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of angel choruses, you hang the stars in the sky, but we do not see them. You fill the night with angelic song, but we do not hear it. You send shepherds to tell the good news, but we do not believe them. You bring love into the world, but we do not seek it.

Quiet the fear in us that works to rationalize, minimize, and distract from the good news you put forth into the world. Tune our hearts back to your song. With hope we pray ...

— *Continue in silent confession* —

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S LOVE

Family of faith, when the angels arrived in the field that night, the shepherds were afraid. But the angels said:

“Do not be afraid. I am bringing you good news of great joy for all people.”

This good news is:

**love freely given, grace radically extended,
welcome always offered, belonging never restricted.**

Friends, we are seen, loved, welcomed, forgiven, called, and sent to serve.

Thanks be to God for a love like that.

†RESPONSE TO GOD'S GRACE

“Gloria”

*No. 188 (REFRAIN ONLY)

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

†SHARING GOD'S PEACE

May the peace of Christ be with you all.
And also with you.

LESSONS AND CAROLS

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 9:2-7

CAROL

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

*No. 185

*Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn king.
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful all ye nations, rise;
join the triumph of the skies;
with the angelic host proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn king!"*

*Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of the virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;
hail the incarnate deity,
pleased in flesh with us to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn king!"*

*Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
risen with healing in his wings.*

*Mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth,
born to give us second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn king!"*

SECOND LESSON

Luke 1:26-35, 38

THIRD LESSON

Luke 1:46-55

CAROL

"The First Nowell"

*No. 229 (Vs. 1, 2, 4, 6)

*The first Nowell the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay,
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.*

Refrain:

*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.*

*They looked up and saw a star
shining in the east beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night. (Refrain)*

*This star drew nigh to the northwest;
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
and there it did both stop and stay,
right over the place where Jesus lay. (Refrain)*

*Then let us all with one accord
sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
that hath made heaven and earth of nought,
and with his blood our life hath bought. (Refrain)*

FOURTH LESSON

Matthew 1:18-23

†CAROL

"Joy to the World"

*NO. 182

*Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her king;
let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.*

*Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.*

*No more let sins and sorrows grow,
nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found,
far as, far as the curse is found.*

*He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.*

THE BIRTH OF JESUS

Luke 2:1-20

CHRISTMAS EVE MESSAGE

"Good News is LOUDER than FEAR!"

Rev. Jamie Milton

†CAROL

"Go Tell It on the Mountain"

*No. 218

Refrain:

*Go, tell it on the mountain,
over the hills and everywhere;
go, tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is born!*

*While shepherds kept their watching
o'er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the heavens
there shone a holy light. (Refrain)*

*The shepherds feared and trembled
when lo! above the earth
rang out the angel chorus
that hailed our Savior's birth. (Refrain)*

*Down in a lowly manger
the humble Christ was born,
and God sent us salvation
that blessed Christmas morn. (Refrain)*

OFFERING

CALL FOR THE OFFERING

MUSICAL OFFERING

CHORAL ANTHEM

*4 p.m. - "Still, Still, Still" - Contemporary Choir
Austrian Carol. Translation and Arrangement by Ruth Elaine
Schram*

*7 p.m. - "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear" - Chancel Choir
Words: Edmund H. Sears; Music: CAROL
written by Richard S. Willis, Arranged by Joel Raney*

— Please record your presence on the "Friendship Pad" —

†DOXOLOGY

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

†PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**God of love, bless these gifts and make them signs of Your
presence in the world. May they carry hope to the fearful,
peace to the troubled, and light to the places that long for it.**

**Teach us to live as bearers of good news — with courage,
compassion, and joy. Amen.**

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The prayer continues ...

... with all your people in every time and place, we join the
chorus of praise, saying:

Holy, holy, holy God, heaven and earth are full of your glory.

**Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is the one who comes in the
name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Every time we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim a truth stronger than fear:

Christ has come.

Christ is with us.

Christ will come again.

The prayer continues...

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors; lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP

You are invited to come forward to receive communion. Using either station at the front of the church, in the balcony, or at the back of the church, you will receive a piece of bread and a cup of juice. Please take communion before returning to your seat. If you wish to remain seated, please raise your hand and a server will come to you.

UNISON PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Holy God, on this night of wonder and light, you have met us at the Table and fed us with your grace. As we leave this place, fill us with courage, surround us with peace, and send us into the world as bearers of good news. May the hope born in Bethlehem take root in us and shine through us for all to see. Amen.

LIGHTING OF CANDLES

John 1:1-14

(As the Scripture is being read, two ushers will light the candles of those seated closest to the center aisle. You are then invited to share the light with your neighbor. Please dip your unlighted candle into the lighted candle of your neighbor.)

*Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
'round yon virgin mother and child!
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace.*

*Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing “Alleluia:
Christ the Savior is born;
Christ the Savior is born!”*

*Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.*

*Silent night, holy night!
Wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing
Alleluia to our King:
Christ the Savior is born;
Christ the Savior is born.*

CHRISTMAS BLESSING

POSTLUDE

SETH CUNNINGHAM



Liturgical texts used with permission from:

Opening prayer adapted from When the World was Dark, from "Cloth for the Cradle." Wild Goose Publications.

Other service liturgy adapted from prayers by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

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All the People

Rev. Jamie Milton

Rev. Linda Williams

4 p.m. Don Clough

7 p.m. Scott Robinson

Leah Sneller

Elaine Edwards

Dawn Auger

Seth Cunningham

Judy Harrelson

Seth Cunningham

Rachel Webb

Martha Tapley

Bill Petzold

Pat Foster

Harold Miller

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ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR DECEMBER 24, 2025

- **Children are always welcome in the sanctuary.** **NURSERY CARE** is available for infants and toddlers during the worship service. Our nursery is equipped with a paging system. Quality childcare is provided by Elaine Edwards, who is infant/ CPR trained.

- The **QUILTS ON DISPLAY** in the sanctuary were created at this year's Advent Dinner. **Thanks to Judy Hudson, Penny Reagh, and Bonnie Marsh** for quilting them together for this beautiful display!

- **WINGS OF PRAYER:** If you have someone you would like to add to our Wings of Prayer list, please contact Patti Wesenick at 989-737-6844.

- **BUILDING OUR FAMILY OF FAITH:** Join the *Bring a Friend Challenge*! Each time you bring a friend, neighbor, coworker, or family member to worship or a church event, you and your guest will be entered into a raffle for prizes (gift cards, a stainless-steel tabletop grill, and more!). Stop by the Wenona Street Welcome kiosk before or after worship for tickets and details.

- **YOUTH GROUP DINNERS:** Do you like to cook or bake meals? If yes, then we would love for you to **sign up to help with**



Youth Dinners for Sunday night youth group meetings.

If not, there is still a way you can help with dinner. You can choose to provide dinner by providing pizza, chicken

tenders, Mac & Cheese or something along those lines. We usually have dinner from 5:30 to 6:00 p.m. You will get a count a couple of days in advance. Please scan the QR code, visit <https://tinyurl.com/bd7hv7u8> or see Leah Sneller to sign up.

- **NATIVITY DISPLAY:** The church will continue to display your nativity scenes all through the Advent season. If you haven't already, take a moment to browse the many varieties of nativities our members have brought.

- **CARING CONNECTIONS:** Come join us on the first Thursday of every month. Our Caring Connections Group will also be open to the Bay City community. Any questions, please see Mary Nicholson or Rev. Linda. Caring Connections will meet again on Thursday, January 8 from 1:30 to 3 p.m. in the Lounge.

- **WINTER BOOK GROUP:** Our Book Group will begin discussing our next book, *The Measure of a Man* by Sidney Poitier, beginning on Tuesday, January 6 at 1:30 p.m. in the lounge. Come join us! Books are available in the church office (suggested \$5 donation). For questions, please call the church office or Rev. Linda.

- **THE CHURCH OFFICE will be closed tomorrow**, Thursday, December 25, for Christmas Day. The office will also be closed next Thursday on New Year's Day, January 1, 2026.

- **HEARTS AND HANDS KNITTING** will meet at 10 a.m. next Tuesday, December 30, at the home of Sharon Hignite. Her son Andy will be preparing lunch for everyone.

- **LOG FOLDING** was postponed until Tuesday, December 30 at 10 a.m.

- **THANK YOU** to everyone who has reached out to me to express their sympathy on the passing of my father, Norm Petzold. Your kindness and thoughtfulness is greatly appreciated. With love and gratitude, Bill Petzold, church secretary, and the Petzold family.

End of Year Information

- **Offering envelopes for 2025** are available for pickup here at the church in the long hallway outside of the sanctuary.
- Any **year-end contributions** that you would like credited for 2025 **MUST** be received (or postmarked) by December 31, 2025. Anything received or postmarked after December 31, regardless of the date on your check or envelope, will be credited to 2026.
- **Year-end statements** will be mailed or emailed around the second week of January. Please review your statement carefully. If you find an error, please let Pat know immediately, so she can make the correction and begin closing the books on 2025.
- Heading to a warmer climate this winter? Have you moved recently? Do you have a new email address? Please call the church office to let us know of these changes so your statement and other church correspondence reaches you.
- If you have not paid your **2025 Per Capita** (\$30.69) you can submit that through the end of December. Please do not pay your 2026 Per Capita until January 1 or after.

Westminster Presbyterian Church

103 E. Midland Street, Bay City, MI 48706
989-686-1360 email: office@wpcbc.org
website: wpcbc.org

The office is open 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Monday through Thursday. Closed noon
to 1 p.m. for lunch each day.

Giving to Westminster

There are many ways to share your gifts with Westminster.

Cash and checks are welcome. Please use your offering envelopes or the envelopes found in pew backs and place your gift in the offering plate when it is passed. Visit our website www.wpcbc.org and click on the "Give Now"



button at the top of the page This will direct you to our Online Giving Portal or simply scan the QR Code. Contributions can also be sent through the mail to the attention of the Church Treasurer. We're grateful for your gifts, however you choose to give. THANK YOU!

GENERAL FUND	Month to Date thru December	
	22	Year to Date
Pledges & Other Giving	\$ 21,374	\$ 422,673
One-time Gifts	\$ -	\$ 31,000
Other Cash Received	\$ 46	\$ 32,180
Total Income	\$ 21,420	\$ 485,853
Expenses	\$ 36,822	\$ 433,764
Net Income/(Loss)	\$ (15,402)	\$ 52,089

Budgeted expense total for the year is \$474,000.

Merry

Christmas!