

Westminster At Worship

*A Celebration of Worship
You Are a Blessing
Sacrament of Communion*

December 1, 2024

10:30 a.m.

Please silence your cell phones prior to entering the sanctuary.

**Those who feel comfortable standing may do so.*



GATHERING AROUND GOD'S WORD

PRELUDE

SETH CUNNINGHAM

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING PRAYER

SPECIAL MUSIC

YOUTH BELLS

"The First Noel," arranged by Bill Ingram

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES - HARRELSON FAMILY

A: In a weary and worn world, how do we begin again?
Where do we start?

B: Let us begin with the good news! Let us begin by trusting that we are a blessing, loved by a gracious God. Let us begin with music and singing! Let us begin with warmth and welcome. Let us begin with hope.

A: Yes, let us begin with hope.

B: Today we light the candle of hope to shine a light in a worn and weary world. May this be our foundation. May this be our fresh start. May this be our new beginning.

A: May hope flow forth from here. Amen!

INTROIT

“While We Are Waiting, Come”

WAITING

*While we are waiting, come;
while we are waiting, come.*

Refrain:

*Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel,
while we are waiting, come.*

†CALL TO WORSHIP

Those who are comfortable standing may do so as we join together in the call to worship.

LEADER: God says,

PEOPLE: “Do not be afraid.”

LEADER: God says,

PEOPLE: “I have called you by name.”

LEADER: God says,

PEOPLE: “I will be with you.”

LEADER: God says,

PEOPLE: “You are precious and honored in my sight.”

LEADER: At the beginning of this season,

PEOPLE: at the start of this week,

LEADER: at the top of this hour,

PEOPLE: may we wrap ourselves in these words.

May we begin again.

LEADER: Let us worship our Holy God!

+HYMN

“Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus”

HYFRYDOL

*Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us;
let us find our rest in thee.
Israel’s strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.*

*Born thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a king,
born to reign in us forever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal Spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all-sufficient merit
raise us to thy glorious throne.*

CALL TO CONFESSION

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Affirming God, Your first words to creation were words of love.
You looked at this earth and said, “It is good.”
You spoke affirmations through the prophets.
You spoke blessings over Mary.
You spoke belonging through Christ.
At every turn, you have reiterated that we are a blessing,
made in your image, held in your love.
Forgive us for forgetting this truth.**

**Forgive us for measuring our worth by society's measuring stick
instead of yours. We believe. Help our unbelief.
In Christ's name we pray,**

— A Time of Silent Confession —

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S GRACE

However, in case it has been a while, hear these words from
Isaiah: God says,

**"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you.
I have called you by name. You are mine."**

We are forgiven. We are loved. Let it leave you awestruck.
Thanks be to God! May we believe it. Amen.

†RESPONSE TO GOD'S GRACE



All glo - ry be to God on high, and to the earth be peace: good
will to all from high - est heav'n be - gin and nev - er cease!

†SHARING GOD'S PEACE

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.
And also with you.

SPECIAL MUSIC

YOUTH BELLS

"A Christmas Lullaby," arranged by Bill Ingram

PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

READINGS FROM THE SCRIPTURES

First Reading
Isaiah 43:1-7
Second Reading
Luke 1:26-38

SERMON

"You Are a Blessing"
Rev. Jamie Milton

†HYMN

"A Word Went Out to Mary"

ES IST EIN ROS ENTSPRUNGEN

*A word went out to Mary:
"God's pow'r wings on its way."
She nourished in her body
hope for our hearts today.
Good news for all the earth:
joy quickens deep within us
that Christ may come to birth.*

*A great and mighty wonder,
that holiness should dwell
in flesh from our flesh labored:
our gift, Emmanuel.
Good news for all the earth:
joy quickens deep within us
that Christ may come to birth.*

*May souls like flowers open
to bear this sweet surprise.
We breathe to bloom like roses
as sacred love arrives.
Good news for all the earth:
joy quickens deep within us
that Christ may come to birth.*

†AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in a blessing God who calls us Beloved.
We believe that this blessing showed up in the life of Mary,
and was also bestowed upon the poor in spirit,
the children, the crowds, the Jews, the Gentiles,
the faithful and the doubting.
So in faith, we trust that God's blessing,
like ripples on the water, forever reaches toward us.
And with wild hope, we believe that because of this blessing,
we are covered in love.
We are more than enough.
Thanks be to God! Amen.

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD WITH THANKSGIVING

INVITATION TO OFFERING

SPECIAL MUSIC

CHANCEL CHOIR

"Come, Emmanuel"

MCDONALD

~ 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.*

†UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**Holy God, your love is magnified in the gift of your Son, whom
you so freely share with us. Bless these gifts that we offer to
lift up the lowly and fill the hungry in your coming reign of
justice and peace; in Christ's name. Amen.**

SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

LEADER: The Lord be with you.

PEOPLE: **And also with you.**

LEADER: Lift up your hearts.

PEOPLE: **We lift them to the Lord.**

LEADER: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

PEOPLE: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

PEOPLE: **Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be 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; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever, Amen.**

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

You are invited to come forward to receive communion. Using either station at the front 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, someone will bring communion to your seat. GLUTEN FREE option is available up front.

COMMUNION MUSIC

SETH CUNNINGHAM

RESPONSIVE PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

LEADER: Nourishing God, sometimes we tell ourselves that too much has taken place to begin again. We think the world is too far gone. We think we have made too many mistakes. We tell ourselves that we couldn't possibly begin again.

ALL: But then we come to this Table and we get a glimpse of your kingdom. We come to this Table and all are welcomed, all are seen, all are fed. And just like that, we have hope. Just like that, we begin again. Thank you for the gift of this fresh start. Thank you for planting hope deep in our bones. Thank you for meeting us in ordinary bread and juice to remind us that it's never too late to build your kingdom here.

LEADER: We are grateful.

ALL: We are so grateful. Amen.

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

SETH CUNNINGHAM



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Invitation to the offering and prayer of dedication from Feasting on the Word Worship Companion:

Liturgies for Year B, Volume 1 © 2014. Westminster John Knox Press.

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NURSERY SUPERVISOR

CHOIR DIRECTOR

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YOUTH BELLS AND CHIME CHOIR DIRECTOR

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Rev. Linda Williams

Anne Remington

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 1, 2024

• **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.

• **RIDES TO CHURCH NEEDED:** we have a few church members that need rides to church. If you are able to help, please call the church office. Thank you!

• **YOUTH GROUP DINNERS:** Our Youth Group meets from 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. on Sunday nights this time includes a meal together. If you are able to prepare and serve a meal or donate money towards dinner, please scan the QR code to sign up. Or call the church office.



• **WAYS TO SUPPORT THE WESTMINSTER COMMUNITY PANTRY:** If you would like to sign up to work our **Westminster Community Pantry**, Wednesday evenings, 4 to 7 p.m. or Thursday mornings, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., please see the sign up sheets on the bulletin board outside the sanctuary.

Our December ITEM OF THE MONTH is flour to help with holiday baking. We will need 2 or 5-pound bags which can be left on the cart outside the pantry door. This pairs nicely with the brown and granulated sugar we have received from Monitor Sugar.

When you are out and about in Bay City, stop by **Cops and Doughnuts** at 710 E. Midland St and **River Rock** at 614 Midland St., along with **other Midland Street businesses**. These neighborhood businesses are helping raise money for our Westminster Community Pantry. While there for a delicious warm doughnut or a juicy burger, you can donate a dollar and place a Christmas "ornament" on the wall. **All**

proceeds will go to OUR Food Pantry, helping us provide food to those in need in Bay County. One dollar donated provides 6 meals.

• Join us after worship on **December 15** as we spread the joy of the holidays with a **CHRISTMAS CAROLING** outing. We will be visiting a number of places, beginning about 1 p.m. and wrapping up before the Detroit Lions game later that afternoon.

• The annual **ADVENT DINNER** is scheduled for **5 p.m. TONIGHT!** Please join us for an evening of fellowship and good food.

• **NEW YEAR, NEW BOOK!** After wrapping up our reading of Savannah Guthrie's book – *Mostly What God Does* (Love Us), our 2025 Book Club Winter Book Study series **begins on Tuesday, January 7th at 1:30 PM** in the Lounge.

• **ADULT BIBLE STUDY** classes are offered at two different times to accommodate various schedules. Join us **Sundays at 9:00 a.m.** in the Session Room or **Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.** via Zoom. The same study materials will be used at both gatherings. Please visit our Adult Bible Study page on our website at www.wpcbc.org or see Rev. Linda or Pastor Jamie with any questions.

• **ANGEL TREE** tags will be available until Sunday, December 15. Participants are encouraged to take an angel tag from the tree located in the entry to the Chapel, write your name and contact number on the bottom portion of the tag and leave that section with representatives at the Angel Tree table in the Wenona Lobby. Purchase the gifts and return them in a gift bag (no tissue paper) or any type of bag to the church by **Noon on Sunday, December 15.**

TODAY is the final day to **order poinsettias for the Christmas Eve service in honor, celebration or memory of a loved one.** Cost is \$11 per plant, and includes a 6-inch pot with foil and a bow. Order forms are included in today's bulletin. Please make checks payable to Westminster Presbyterian Church.

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL BOOKLETS are available today! This year we will be using the **Words for the Beginning** series.

Advent is a season of endings and beginnings. As the calendar year comes to a close, a new church year begins. Christ's birth ushers us into new ways of living and loving; and yet, the world as we know it spins madly on.

In many ways, pregnant Mary was surrounded by endings—large and small, personal and political. But Mary proclaimed hope in a God who was and is making all things new. Christ's birth offered a beautiful new beginning for shepherds and Magi alike—all the while, King Herod tried to bring Christ's story to an end. When we ourselves navigate seasons filled with endings and beginnings, we need reminders. We need words that can feel like steady ground, like a path for our feet to find as we step forward into the unknown.

This year's Advent series is filled with blessings, with the scriptures and reminders we need to hear again and again as we begin a new season. These reminders root us in the fundamental truths of our faith. Many of them are life lessons we teach to children—lessons that adults continue to learn and relearn. They may resemble the blessings we impart to loved ones during special ceremonies like weddings, graduations, or baptisms.

And so, we invite you to move through this Advent season as if you are entering a sacred new chapter, holding fast to the reminders that will bolster you for the journey ahead.

Read, look, and sing your way through the pages of this year's devotional. Each week (beginning with Advent and concluding with Epiphany) offers art, reflections, poetry, and hymns to give you strength, courage, and grace. Each week has its own separate theme and reminders of God's love and presence through the gift of Jesus:

- *YOU ARE A BLESSING*
- *WE CAN'T GO ALONE*
- *DO THE GOOD THAT IS YOURS TO DO*
- *HOPE IS WORTH THE RISK*
- *LOVE KNOWS YOUR NAME*
- *DON'T FORGET TO LAUGH*
- *THE ROAD ISN'T STRAIGHT*

A **PARENTS NIGHT OUT** is being planned for 5 to 8 p.m. on Friday, December 13th. We want to give our parents a night off during this holiday season. Bring the kiddos over to the church where we will have dinner and a fun evening together! Please see Leah Sneller, Sheryl Petroff or call the church office at (989) 686-1360 to register your children for the event!

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM REHEARSAL SCHEDULE:

TODAY: after church with Tie-Dye Party
December 8: During Youth Group
December 14th: Dress Rehearsal, 10 a.m.
December 15th: Christmas Program performance, 10:30 a.m.

PER CAPITA 2024 Per capita for 2024 is \$29.50. Remember that Per Capita goes to fund the greater church including our Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly, which in turn, provides great support to Westminster. **Look for the blue envelopes in the pew backs or in your box of envelopes.**

JOIN US ON FACEBOOK: Westminster Presbyterian Church-Bay City

BULLETIN BOARDS: Check out the Church bulletin board just outside the sanctuary for upcoming church events and happenings, **plus sign-up sheets for volunteer opportunities for:**

- **Westminster Community Pantry**
- **Food Bank of Eastern Michigan**
- **Food of Faith**
- **Matthew 25 Cafe**
- **Fellowship Time Host**

In addition, the Community bulletin board in Fellowship Hall has information on health screenings, grief groups and other events in the area.

TV AND SOUNDBOARD: We're looking for individuals who can run the soundboard and help in the TV room on Sunday mornings. If you are interested in helping, please call the church office. Thank you!

CORRECTION: There is a typographical error in the December issue of the Log. In the treasurer's report on Page 12, the year-to-date income should be listed as \$365,042.56, not \$314,571.98 as it was incorrectly printed.

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 below.

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!



Westminster Presbyterian Church

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989-686-1360
email: office@wpcbc.org
website: wpcbc.org

Office Hours

Monday - Thursday
8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.