



December 1, 2024 | Morning Worship 9:30 am

Welcome to Westminster! Please sign in so that we can connect with you!
Use the binders in your pew OR text WORSHIP to 563-227-8441

If You Are Worshipping...

Online – All the worship songs and words will be on your screen so that you can fully participate.

In The Sanctuary – If you are comfortably able, we invite you to stand during portions of worship marked with an asterisk (*). The congregation reads items listed in bold text. *Please note:* Our service is always live-streamed with multiple cameras in the sanctuary. You will likely be on camera at some point during your worship experience.

With Children – We are delighted with the presence of (and the sounds of) children in worship. Children are welcome to use any of the resources in our PrayGround (located behind the back pews). The back pews are for parents of children using the PrayGround, and the rocking chairs are reserved especially for nursing mothers or parents whose children need a cuddle and some rocking. **Also, childcare is available in our nursery down the hall.**

Prayer Requests – Each week, we encourage folks to share their joys and concerns with one another using the *Prayer Cards* in the pews. Please complete a *Prayer Card* and place it in the Offering Plate during worship. This will ensure your prayers are lifted up to God in worship and/or in private.

Special accommodations –

Assisted listening devices are available at the back of the sanctuary.

Anyone with mobility issues is welcome to use the padded green chairs located strategically throughout the sanctuary. There are spaces within the pews for wheelchairs. Ushers are happy to assist you with these or other accommodations.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

MINUTE FOR MISSION *“A Brighter Christmas is in the Bag!”*

Tom Stovall

PRELUDE - Handbell Choir *O Come, O Come Emmanuel*

arr. Valerie Stephenson

FOR PRAYER AND REFLECTION

God says, "Do not be afraid." God says, "I have called you by name."
God says, "I will be with you." God says, "You are precious and honored in my sight."
At the beginning of this season, at the start of this week, at the top of this hour,
may we wrap ourselves in these words.

OPENING PRAYER

*CANDLE LIGHTING LITURGY

Adam & Tarra Etheredge Family

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

ALL: 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.

ONE: Yes, let us begin with hope.

Today we light the candle of hope to shine a light in a worn and weary world.

The candle is lit.

ALL: May this be our foundation.

May this be our fresh start.

May this be our new beginning.

ONE: May hope flow forth from here.

ALL: Let us worship our Holy God!

*SONG OF PRAISE #100

Canticle of the Turning

CALL TO CONFESSION

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.

SILENT CONFESSION

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

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.

***SUNG RESPONSE from** *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is giv'n! So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of His heav'n. No ear may hear His coming, but in this world of sin, where meek souls will receive Him still, the dear Christ enters in.

****PASSING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Please take a moment to extend the peace of Christ to one another by greeting those around you. Say "hello", wave, learn each other's names – whatever feels most comfortable to you.

TIME WITH YOUNGER DISCIPLES

Following the "Time with Younger Disciples," Our youngest disciples, ages 3-grade 3, are encouraged to join our Faith Formation leaders for Children's Church. They will encounter God at a developmentally-appropriate level with safe adults. The child(ren) can be picked up at the conclusion of worship downstairs. Then, enjoy treats and fellowship together!

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READINGS Luke 1:26-38, Isaiah 43:1-7

These are the Words of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

SERMON Words for the Beginning: "You are a blessing"

***HYMN OF RESPONSE** *I Will Change Your Name* by D.J. Butler

I will change your name,
You shall no longer be called outcast, wounded, lonely or afraid.

I will change your name, Your new name shall be, Confidence, joyfulness,
overcoming one, Faithfulness, friend of God, one who seeks my face.

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:** You are a Blessing

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 hemorrhaging woman, 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.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE *Please hold the elements until all have been served.
All bread is gluten-free.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

THE OFFERING

***OFFERTORY** *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming* arr. Wellman

DOXOLOGY #606

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND PETITION

***SENDING HYMN #82** *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*

*BENEDICTION

***POSTLUDE** *Prepare the Way, O Zion* arr. Blade

* You are invited to rise.

SCRIP gift cards are available today in the Narthex.

WE ARE GLAD YOU ARE HERE! Interested in learning more about these congregations? Wondering how to get connected on a deeper level? Thinking about what becoming a member of the church may look like? Pastor Stephanie would love to talk with you. Simply contact her at fpcdbq.pastor@gmail.com or (507) 227-8537.

The worship schedule for Dec 2024 is as follows:

- 1st/3rd/5th Sunday - WPC (Communion on 1st Sunday)
- 2nd/4th Sunday - FPC
- **WEATHER BAD? IS CHURCH CANCELED?** If inclement weather exists, **Sunday morning worship** may be moved from FPC to WPC OR canceled. Such a decision will be made no later than 7am Sunday morning and will be posted on the WPC and FPC website and emailed to both congregations. If Sunday morning worship is canceled, there will be no Sunday evening activities. **During the week**, we will follow the Dubuque Community Schools closings and/or delays. Please be diligent in planning for winter weather circumstances.

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Decking the Halls! Join us immediately following worship today to decorate the WPC sanctuary for advent and Christmas! Each year, we enjoy doing this together as a church, and there are jobs for all ages.

Our **annual Community Blue Christmas Service** will be held at First Congregational United Church of Christ (255 W 10th St, Dubuque) on **Wednesday, December 18th at 6:30pm**. Childcare will be available. This gentle, contemplative service offers space for the complex feelings we may be carrying during this holiday season. Come and be reminded God walks with us in the valleys and in our pain, as well as in our joy and celebration.

Our Lessons & Carols **Christmas Eve Worship** will be held at First Presbyterian Church on Tuesday, December 24th at 7:00pm. Come and celebrate our newborn king, Jesus the Christ!

The sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be celebrated today during worship. This sacrament is a gift of God, for the people of God; and we welcome you to fully participate with us. If you are worshiping with us online, please utilize food and drink you have available; trusting the power of the Holy Spirit to be present in our community far and wide!

Tithes and offerings collected in today's service will be contributed to the general fund of Westminster Presbyterian Church. As a faithful pledger, you are encouraged to continue your giving patterns to either WPC or FPC. This can be done via electronic giving, mail, or simply holding your pledge until worship is at the church of your pledge commitment.

THE GREEN TEAM PROVIDES TROLLEY: The Outreach and Hospitality Teams are sponsoring **Christmas caroling TODAY** traveling to places around town where members live, mostly in nursing homes or assisted living sites. **Meet at the church at 2:30 p.m.** The Green Team has provided the cost of the trolley from their budget. From a "Green" perspective using the trolley makes more ecological sense than having several cars transporting our carolers around town and putting a lot more carbon emissions into the air than a single vehicle would. We are caring for God's Creation!

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

We are in the process of combining those that provide treats on Sunday into one group from FPC & WPC to that of a new group. The treat will be after Church Service & we will eliminate the donut hole treats. To do this we will need families from both FPC & WPC to sign up. Pastor Stephanie has provided a list of families from FPC. We need families from WPC to sign up. Please give Rich Henderson your name if you would like to do this. We hope to get enough families so we can have at least 2 families for each Sunday for a month.

A Brighter Christmas is in the Bag! The members of First and Westminster are teaming up to help the Dubuque Food Pantry by providing donations of food and other items to fill the Christmas Baskets for our needy family neighbors.

Here's how it works and how you can help. On Sundays, December 1st or December 8th, pick up a reusable tote bag before or after worship (or from the WPC church office during the week). A list of needed items will be provided. Take the bag home and fill it up with some of the food and other items from the needs list.

Bring the filled bag back to church on Sundays, December 8th or December 15th. All the food will be blessed during worship on December 15th and delivered to the Dubuque Food Pantry the next morning. Thanks for helping with this Mission Team project.



Deacons Fund: Memorial Poinsettias for Church Decorations Donations accepted through Dec. 15.

Use a **form** or email marykay@wpcdbq.org or call the office at 583-1729 and mail your \$15 or \$25 memorial donation. Include who your Poinsettia is in memory of or in honor of.



Wreaths for Church Decorations

Would you like to donate a Christmas wreath in honor of or in memory of a special someone? Fill out an envelope on the counter in church or email Mary Kay at marykay@wpcdbq.org and mail your check for **\$23**. Include the name of who your wreath is in memory of. Donations accepted through Dec. 15.



Sunday, December 1 – Pick up Food Pantry Tote Bags

9:30am – **Worship, Communion & Children's Church at WPC**

with **Coffee Hour to follow!**

2:30pm – Intergenerational Christmas Caroling – meet at WPC

5:00 pm – Hot Chocolate, Light Meal and Decorate Christmas Cookies, WPC

Tuesday, December 3

9am – Tai Chi, WPC-Narthex

9am-1pm Pastor's Office Hours at WPC

1pm – Property Mtg., WPC, BR

Wednesday, December 4

11:15am – Staff Mtg., WPC

3:30pm – Book Club, BR

5pm - Handbells Rehearsal, WPC

Thursday, December 5

9am-1pm Pastor's Office Hours at FPC

Sunday, December 8 – Pick up Food Pantry Tote Bags

9:30am – **Worship & Christmas Play at FPC**

Coffee, treats and fellowship following worship.

5:30pm – Food, Faith and Fellowship, WPC

6pm – Partnership Task Force Mtg., WPC, WR

HAVE A PRAYER CONCERN OR JOY TO SHARE? Folks on the **FPC Prayer Chain** would be honored to pray for you. Simply email Pastor Stephanie at fpcdbq.pastor@gmail.com, and she will distribute your request. You may also join the FPC Prayer Chain this way!

CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER LIST FOR WESTMINSTER

- For **Janet Porter's** recovery & healing from hip surgery.
- For **Mark Thetford** who is on hospice care, managing his symptoms.
- For **Joyce Veach**, Mary Kay's sister in-law, who has liver cancer.
- For **HannaRose Otting's** brain health concerns.
- For **Doug & Lois Pearce** for ongoing health issues.
- For all those on the **Deacons Care List**.

For Pastoral Care please call the **pastoral care # 563-279-4545** with your pastoral needs or call the office at 563-583-1729.

CHURCH STAFF

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Pastor: Rev. Stephanie Ells
Director of Music: Kristen Eby
Deacon of the Month: Deb Stant
Streaming Team: Stant/Boelk
Greeter of the Month: Kristen Eby

PASTOR STEPHANIE'S SERMONS are available in print form. If you are interested in receiving a copy of her sermon via email or mail, please contact her directly at fpcdbq.pastor@gmail.com or 507.227.8537

507-227-8537 | firstpresdbq@gmail.com | www.firstpresdbq.org

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Preacher: Rev. Stephanie Ells
Care Coordinator: Sam Wu #563-279-4545
Director of Music: Dr. Luke Tyler
Handbell Director: Kristen Eby
Choir Director: Steve Peake
Timbrel & Lyre Director: Dr. Luke Tyler
Band Director: Sally Stulken
Organist/Pianist: Dr. Luke Tyler
Church Administrator: Mary Kay Pancratz
Financial Secretary: Becky Jenkins
Custodian: Josh Henry
Worship Tech: Deb Seiffert, Marsha Wilfong, Bruce Hallahan

Liturgist: Ann Lorenz
Musician: Kristen Eby
Musical Ensemble: Handbell Choir
Greeters: Tom & Linda Stovall
Ushers: Sally Madden & Carolyn Dausener
Hospitality Set Up: Pat Judge
Hospitality Clean Up: Pat Edwards
Communion Servers: Alex Jack, Judy Sheridan, Deb Stant, Lindsay Ward, FPC. Glinda Manternach, Myra Delong, Mike Jozefowicz and Doug Cheever, WPC.

CONNECT WITH WESTMINSTER | Scan these codes to ...



WORSHIP
ONLINE



GIVE ONLINE



BUY SCRIP



WORSHIP
CHECK-IN

(563) 583-1729 | churchoffice@wpcdbq.org | WPCdbq.org