



**December 15, 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.

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**WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**MINUTE FOR MISSION**

*"The Christmas Joy Offering"*

Susan Taylor

**PRELUDE** Church Band

*What Child Is This?*

arr. Harold Walters

**FOR PRAYER AND REFLECTION**

"Teacher," the crowd asked, "What should we do?" If you have two shirts, give one away. Hold onto hope. Live like we belong to one another. Speak the truth. Look for

God. Do the good that is yours to do. It's all that easy, and it's all that hard to follow our active and present God.

**\*CANDLE LIGHTING LITURGY**

Tom & Linda Stovall and their grandchildren

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

Where do we start?

**ALL: Let us start small.**

**Let us begin with what is right in front of us.**

**Let us do the good that is ours to do and let us do it with joy!**

ONE: Yes, let us begin with joy.

Today we light candles of hope, peace and joy.

*3 candles are lit.*

**ALL: May these lights remind us of what could be.**

**May these lights inspire action.**

**May the warmth of these lights fill us with joy.**

ONE: May it be so!

**ALL: Let us worship our present and active God.**

**\*SONG OF PRAISE #104**

*O Lord, How Shall I Meet You*

**CALL TO CONFESSION**

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**Liberating God, There are days when the world can feel like it's crumbling. There are days when I doubt that I can make a difference. I ask myself, What could these two hands do? What could this one voice say? Shake me free of my own paralysis and self-doubt. Remind me that I am not called to fix everything. I am simply called to do the good that is mine to do. With hope in my heart and a fire in my bones, I pray. Amen.**

**SILENT CONFESSION**

**RESPONSIVE DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS**

Trusting in this good news, join me in proclaiming these words of forgiveness:

**We are loved. We are forgiven. We are invited to do the good that is ours to do.**

**Thanks be to God for this new beginning. 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 down the hall. Then, enjoy treats and fellowship together!*

## **PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

### **SCRIPTURE READINGS**

Isaiah 58:9b-12, Luke 3:7-16

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God!**

### **SERMON**

Words for the Beginning: “Do the Good that is yours to do”

### **\*HYMN OF RESPONSE #749**

*Come! Live in the Light!*

### **\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: The Apostles’ Creed**

**I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son our Lord who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## **THE OFFERING**

### **\*OFFERTORY**

*It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*

arr. Warner

### **\*DOXOLOGY #606**

### **\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND PETITION**

## **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.**

\*SENDING HYMN #96

*On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry*

\*BENEDICTION

\*POSTLUDE

*People, Look East*

arr. Amber

\* You are welcome to stand in body or spirit.

**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](mailto:fpcdbq.pastor@gmail.com) or (507) 227-8537.

**The worship schedule for Dec 2024 is as follows:**

- 4th Sunday, Dec. 22nd – FPC & 5th Sunday, Dec. 29th - WPC

**WORSHIP LOCATION & OFFERING:** For the months of January through March we will hold worship at Westminster Presbyterian Church every Sunday. The Sessions of both congregations have approved this in order to provide for optimal safety and ease during the coldest weather months. We will continue to distribute the offering to **FPC** on the *2nd & 4th Sunday* of each month, and to **WPC** on the *1st, 3rd, & 5th Sundays*; and will have reminders in the bulletin each week for your convenience.

- **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

**TODAY...** Join us in the Narthex after worship for Coffee and Treats; Christmas SCRIP gift card sales and Meet Michael Zoughbi and see his display of olive wood figurines from Bethlehem. If interested they will be available to purchase during Sunday Night Fellowship.

### SUNDAY NIGHT FOOD, FAITH AND FELLOWSHIP

5:30 - Food and Fellowship

6:00 - 7:00 Child care; 3years – 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade and 4<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Curriculum and activities

Mom's on Fire, lower level classroom

Michael Zoughbi, an Arab Christian Palestinian residing in historic

Bethlehem will be speaking and sharing exquisite olive wood products

crafted by local Christian families as they strive to support those facing immense challenges.

## **LAST CALL FOR HUNGER OUTREACH VOLUNTEERS - SIGN UP TODAY!**

Our next Hunger Outreach food distribution will be on Saturday, December 21st at Westminster. We still need several volunteers from 8:00-10:30 a.m. to greet and register participants, organize food for distribution, load food into cars, assist walk-up recipients and provide traffic control. We can provide everyone with a job that matches their comfort level. Sign up today on our sign-up sheet at the information counter at the back of the sanctuary or contact Tom Stovall at 563-581-7220 or at tomstov@aol.com Hope you can join us!

**The FPC-WPC PARTNERSHIP TASKFORCE** meets biweekly as we navigate the needs of our new congregation moving forward. There are four working groups: **Worship** - Roger Ebertz (FPC) & Sue Taylor (WPC); **Care & Culture** - Deb Stant (FPC) & Tom Stovall (WPC); **Communication and Technology** – Chris Daniels (FPC) & Kim David (WPC); **Legal & Assets** - Lindsey Ward (FPC) & Rich Henderson (WPC). We encourage you to address these folks when you have questions and/or input regarding the process of joining; and we appreciate your patience as we purposefully and carefully make appropriate shifts together.

**A Brighter Christmas is in the Bag!** Thanks to all for a wonderful response in providing bags of food and other items to help the Dubuque Food Pantry to provide Christmas baskets for our needy family neighbors. The food will be blessed during worship today and delivered to the Dubuque Food Pantry early tomorrow morning.

**Join us this week for our annual COMMUNITY BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE** to 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 Candlelight 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! ***Because of tight parking at First Presbyterian Church we will have the Trolley available & we will also offer carpooling for those who find it hard to get up the stairs of the Trolley. We are asking you to sign up for carpooling at the information table so we can arrange to have cars available.***

**CHURCH VOLUNTEERS NEEDED** - Your help is needed for 2025

Looking for Liturgists – one per Sunday

Need two greeters and two ushers per service

Need two families to serve snacks after the church service.

Suggested – 3 dozen cookies or mini muffins and water or juice for the youth.

Sign up at the Information Table. **Thanks for your help!**

# CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS



**Deacons Fund:  
Memorial Poinsettias for Church Decorations at FPC & WPC  
Donations accepted through Dec. 15.**

Use a **form** or email [marykay@wpcdbq.org](mailto: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](mailto: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.



Be sure to order Christmas **gift cards**. **NO LATER THAN TODAY!** Order from over 400 vendors and Karla can have them for you after December 18. Local cards always available.

**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](mailto: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 & Bill Porter's 65<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary** on December 19th. Congrats!
- For **Mark Thetford** who passed away on November 25<sup>th</sup> at Bethany Home.
- For **Joyce Veach**, Mary Kay's sister in-law, who has liver cancer.
- For **HannaRose Otting's** brain health concerns.
- For **Doug & Lois Pearce's** ongoing health issues. Doug is at rehab at Grand Meadows.
- 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.

**Sunday, December 15 – Blessing of Donated Food Pantry Tote Bags**9:30am – **Worship & Children’s Church at WPC****Coffee, treats and fellowship following worship.**

1:30pm – WPC Hosts Worship at Bethany Home

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

**Monday, December 16**

9am-4pm – Pastor Ells - Study/Planning Day (out of office)

**Tuesday, December 17**

9am – Tai Chi, WPC-Narthex

9am-4pm – Pastor Ells - Study/Planning Day (out of office)

**11:30am-1pm – OFFICE CLOSED for luncheon**

6pm – Session Mtg., WPC, BR

**Wednesday, December 18**

9am – Session On Boarding, WPC, WR

11:15am – Staff Mtg., WPC

11:30am – Pastor Ells – JKP Region 3 Gathering

5pm - Handbells Rehearsal, WPC, SA

6:30pm – **Community Blue Christmas Service** at  
First Congregational UCC**Thursday, December 19**

9am-1pm Pastor’s Office Hours at FPC

9am -Worship Comm. Taskforce, WPC, WR

**BECKY OFF****Saturday, December 21**

8am – Hunger Outreach, FH, K

11am-1pm – FPC Session/Deacons at FPC

**Sunday, December 22**9:30am – **Worship & Children’s Church at FPC****Coffee, treats and fellowship following worship.**

1:30pm – FPC Hosts Worship at Bethany Home

5:30pm – **NO** Food, Faith and Fellowship Tonight (Resumes 1-5-2025)

The Daily Devotional,  
**THESE DAYS**  
for January, February & March  
are in the Narthex.

**Year End Giving**

December is traditionally a generous month at Westminster & First Presbyterian. Many people complete their pledges before the end of the year, and many people give extra so we finish the year in the black.

**Thank you for your financial support of First and Westminster Presbyterian Churches.**

In order to have your contribution included on your **2024 Contribution Statement**, please make sure it arrives at the office **by December 29th.**

**Becky Jenkins, Financial Secretary**

**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](mailto:fpcdbq.pastor@gmail.com) or 507.227.8537

# CHURCH STAFF

## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

**Pastor:** Rev. Stephanie Ells

**Director of Music and Choir Director:** Kristen Eby

**Streaming Team:** Mark Stant and Tom Boelk

**Coffee Hour Host:** Deb Stant

[507-227-8537](tel:507-227-8537) | [firstpresdbq@gmail.com](mailto:firstpresdbq@gmail.com) | [www.firstpresdbq.org](http://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:** Jolene Kilcoyne

**Musician:** Kristen Eby

**Musical Ensemble:** Church Band

**Greeters:** Tom & Judi Schutt

**Ushers:** Randy Roos & Adam Etheredge

**Hospitality Set Up:** Doug & Jean Cheever

**Hospitality Clean Up:** Shirley Meriwether

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ONLINE**



**GIVE ONLINE**



**BUY SCRIP**



**WORSHIP  
CHECK-IN**

[\(563\) 583-1729](tel:563-583-1729) | [churchoffice@wpcdbq.org](mailto:churchoffice@wpcdbq.org) | [WPCdbq.org](http://WPCdbq.org)