

**SEPTEMBER
MESSENGER
2020**



**VIRTUAL COMMUNION
SUNDAY, SEPT. 6**



**NOMINATING
COMMITTEE
SEE PAGE 3**



**WORSHIP VIRTUALLY
WITH US
SUNDAYS ONLINE**

THE MESSENGER

“I believe relationships - with God and one another”



Greetings Westminster Church Family,

It is with much joy and excitement that I finally have the privilege of greeting you all in our Westminster Messenger! The past few months have provided a series of moments of building anticipation for September 2020 - this very month!

**Rev. Chris Peters
will commence
duties as Head
of Staff on
September 14.**

From the moment Lauren and I stepped onto the rich Nebraska soil for the first time in June, to the evening we wore our new Cornhusker shirts with the PNC, to the morning of July 26, when I was asked to join the Zoom Congregational meeting after being voted in as Westminster's new Head of Staff - Lauren and I have been overjoyed and living in anticipation for this moment and for this month!

I believe relationships - with God and one another - are the most important considerations in our lives of faith. We can see this throughout scripture, and we see it clearly in Christ's Greatest Commandment to love God and to love our neighbors. I have been working with the PNC and staff to dream up plans for our church family to begin building our relationships when we join together in ministry. On **Sunday, September 20**, we will have an opportunity to gather at the **Antelope Park Bandshell at 7:00pm for a time of fellowship and safe in-person interaction**. More details will be shared in the Vine and other communications, but I hope you will plan to join us with your lawn chairs or a blanket as we begin connecting!

I know there are many questions about our worship life together. First, I want to assure you all that I will be working with the session and a designated task force to continually assess the safety and viability of in-person worship. As we continue online worship, I am excited to share that we will embark on a four week series on **Encountering Grace... Meeting Grace** in Jesus Christ, **Living Grace** in a Community of Disciples, **Instructing Grace** in the Ten Commandments, and **Sustaining Grace** through the encouragement of Paul to the Philippians. This series will include our World Communion Sunday celebration on October 4. I look forward to our worship together, as we continue to worship with gratitude each week.

You have been a faithful and resilient church family through simultaneously challenging seasons in the life of a church and in our world. You have lived in and through a time of transition in pastoral leadership while searching for a new Head of Staff. That alone can create uncertainty in our lives and in our community. I am grateful for the purposeful and personal work of the PNC and the competent and skilled guidance of Rev. Val Putnam. Second, we are living in and through a time of pandemic unlike any season many of us have seen in our lifetimes. This time continues to create uncertainty for our families and for our church family, but as we believe, God's grace will sustain us. I am grateful for the gifted and caring leadership of Jimmy Shelbourn and Gwen Thorpe in their Bridge positions, as well as our excellent music, office, and preschool staff in recent months.

I look forward to hitting the ground running on my first day, Monday, September 14, as we seek to worship and serve God. Lauren and I continue to pray with and for Westminster.

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Chris Peters. Head of Staff - Elect

CHURCH NEWS

Check out our website and watch Rev. Chris Peter's Greeting Video for Westminster Presbyterian church here: <https://westminsterlincoln.org/youtube-videos/>

Westminster Nominating Committee



The Westminster Nominating Committee has started meeting. Please prayerfully consider and forward suggested nominees for our Westminster leadership. This is an exciting time as we join with our new called pastor in leading Westminster along God's path. Thank you for your consideration.

Virtual Communion Sunday | Worship Service | September 6

The Virtual Communion YouTube service will be posted September 6. The General Assembly Council and Clerk have given churches leave to have members prepare their own elements at home and receive as they watch virtual worship. Before you watch the Communion service, please have bread (of any sort) and a cup of grape juice or wine for each member of your household who is watching.

Pastor Jimmy Shelbourn preaching.

Scripture: Psalm 105:23-27, 37-39; Exodus 3:1-15

A BIG THANK YOU

Thank you to Andrew Finkner and Devon Nelson for the work they've done with the youth of this church. They have both gone on to other ventures, so they will no longer be on staff at Westminster. We wish them well!

Mission Project

The Pill Bottle Collection Project will close in September. The collection bin will remain at the Church until September 15. Thank you everyone for your contributions.

Fraudulent Emails



As many of you are aware, members of our congregation have been receiving scam emails which purport to be from either Rev. Shelbourn, and recently Rev. Peters. In previous eVines we have stated that the ministers or any church staff member will never ask you to purchase a gift card via email. However, these emails do tug at our emotions and can make us wonder if they are legitimate.

With that in mind, here are some things to consider if you do receive a suspicious email:

- Notice the email address of the sender. Often it comes from a gmail, yahoo, etc. address, but the name of the minister may be misspelled or look unusual. Westminster Presbyterian Church email addresses are: name@Westminsterlincoln.org
- Notice the spelling and grammar of the email. The sentence structure may be awkward. Often the email requests urgent action.
- Pay attention to how the email ends. Does it end with a comment that really sounds like something the sender would say? If it seems odd, it's probably a scam.
- Call the church office or the minister or staff person who supposedly sent the email to verify if it did come from them.

We have reported the email scam to the Federal Trade Commission and the Lincoln Police Department. Churches all throughout Lincoln and the State of Nebraska, and probably the whole country, have been targeted. Most of these scam emails come from overseas and are extremely difficult to trace.

The question of how the scammer knows our home email address is difficult to answer, they use very sophisticated tools. Our best defense is a good offense! Be vigilant and question anything suspicious. Don't reply to the email, just notify the church office and delete it. Remember to change your passwords frequently.

News from Westminster Presbyterian Women

It goes without saying this is a different time. However, Presbyterian Women know how to deal with change. On Saturday, August 22, our women met not in the usual way around rolls and coffee in Fellowship Hall but in the circle drive outside. Our coordinating team headed by Glenna Haller and Linda Burchard coordinated a Drive by Tea. From 9 a.m. until 10:30 a.m. members of our four study circles drove in, picked up their teacup, cookies and tea bag along with their 2020-2021 study and drop off the personal care kits prepared for one of PWs mission projects and used prescription bottles everyone had collected to be sent to mission areas across the globe. The kits which included a towel, toothbrush, nail clippers, comb, soap and band aids filled several boxes while the tower of bottles was overflowing.



The author of our study Into the Light: Finding Hope Through Prayers of Lament is by P. Lynn Miller is a minister in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and is an author, workshop leader, speaker, and graphic designer. She believes we all lament throughout our lives. In our present situation, we lament the inability to be together in worship, to meet with our friends without social distancing and masks. We lament the riots and cry out for peace and justice for all. Miller declares lament – crying out to God – brings hope, and with that thought to guide, study circles will begin exploring biblical lament this month.



If you are not currently part of a PW circle study, we invite you to contact Rev. Ellen Davis (edavis3655@gmail.com) for more information or simply contact one of the following circle moderators.

Circle 3 – Wednesday, September 9, 10 a.m. | Church Lounge – Linda Miller 402-423-1311
(Note: Normal meeting day is first Wednesday)



Circle 4 – Tuesday, September 8, 7 p.m. | Zoom Meeting –
Kathy Anderson 402-430-6084

(Note: Normal meeting day is first Monday)

Circle 5 – Tuesday, September 8, 10 a.m. | Church Lounge –
Pat Hackley 402-423-2909

Circle 6 – Tuesday, September 22, 7 p.m. | Church Lounge
(not the library like we used to, more room for social
distancing). – Jane Hines 402-488-8302

Green@ HEART

One area of our commitment as an Earth Care Congregation (in addition to Worship, Education, and Facilities) is “Outreach—Beyond Our Own Church. “

PC(USA) suggested actions and examples include:

- Getting out into God’s Creation
enjoying/tending church grounds, Calvin Crest, home gardens, service projects
- Making Lifestyles Changes
supporting actions of members at home and in our community
- Engaging in Public Awareness and Advocacy
writing letters, attending hearings
- Standing with Others
participating in disaster mitigation/relief, public environmental events
- Spreading the Word
identifying publicly as an Earth Care Congregation, collaborating with other groups

UNL’s Sustainability Summit is a chance to hit several of those notes. Learn about UNL’s Sustainability and Resilience Plan, hear Mary Pipher talk about Trauma and Recovery, explore the intersectionality of racism and the environment. Three events in three days, September 1,2,and 3. For more information go to <https://sustainability.unl.edu/sustainability-summit-2020>

Reminder: All information for The Messenger is due to Tracy Hoffman at tracy@westminsterlincoln.org by the 18th of each month. All announcements for The eVine are due to Joanne Gabriel at joanne@westminsterlincoln.org by 5 pm on Monday of each week.

Westminster Preschool September 2020



Our 2020-2021 school year began on August 12. Even with some changes to our regular protocol, you could not hide the excitement and joy of both students and teachers! Everyone was so excited to see their friends from last year, make new friends and come together for new learning experiences!

We are enjoying learning all about our school and the people in it, as well as our classroom and school expectations! It has become regular practice to check out everyone's cool masks and decide which is our favorite of the day! Our teachers have used social stories and resources to help our preschool friends feel comfortable with mask wearing, seeing others in masks and understanding that masks help us keep everyone safe and healthy. They have been amazing!

Westminster Preschool is blessed to welcome two new teachers this year; Miss Sarah and Miss Lindsay. They are both in the preschool classroom and bring their wealth of knowledge and experiences to enrich the lives of the children there! Our school houses the most wonderful, caring, nurturing and knowledgeable educators on the planet (no bias here!) and we are so incredibly fortunate to have all these amazing teachers daily touching the lives of our students and families. Please keep them in your continued prayers as they lead with love!





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Mission and Outreach and Green@Heart want to alert you to this opportunity:

You are invited to the online **FIFTH Elders for the Earth**, October 12 and 13, 2020.

Because the climate crisis continues and worsens every moment, every day. Our work is more critical now than ever!

Over the two day period, our goals will be to: strengthen community, offer new information, and inspire renewed and expanded action!

Clear your calendar for the whole event or drop in and out as you need.

The website address is : <https://elders4theearth.com/>

