

December  
2020



See Page 5 for Details



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# THE MESSENGER



## ACTIVE ANTICIPATION

Westminster Family,

**Active Anticipation.** Two words that seem as though they don't belong together. Still, if there's one time in the life of the church where we "actively anticipate" as God's people, it's during the upcoming season of Advent. The word Advent comes from a Latin word meaning, "Arrival." In Advent we actively anticipate the "arrival" of Jesus that we celebrate at Christmas.

This Advent comes in a year where it seems we're constantly anticipating a better, less stressful, clearer, and safer future.

As we approach Advent 2020, I have a sense of “anticipation fatigue” that started back in March and recently returned with the surge in cases that sent our Lincoln community into the “red” COVID level for the first time. You may feel the same. Still, there is good news. The good news is this: as Christians we actively anticipate with hope because of the hope that we have met in the Christ-child.

In Advent 2020, we have much to *actively anticipate with hope* for 2021, but we also are called to continue to develop our faith in this special season. I am excited to announce a church-wide Advent focus using scripture, art, a devotional, worship, and several service projects with the theme “Those Who Dream.” I want to invite our church family – to invite you – to *actively anticipate with hope* in these ways...

**Virtual Worship and Drive-In Christmas Eve...** As some of you have noticed, our Virtual Worship services have made a dramatic shift in presentation with mostly HD-quality video and by moving the Welcome and (re-introduced) Children’s Chats to different locations around the church each week. In Advent we will continue this shift forward in our virtual worship experience. I hope all of our households will commit to watching worship the four Sundays of Advent. On Christmas Eve, we will welcome you to drive-in worship services at 4:30pm, 5:30pm, and 6:30pm. These will be 30-minute services with a Christmas hymn, short meditation/message, and Silent Night – BYOC “Bring Your Own Candle” style. We will share more information about Christmas Eve as that night nears.

**Education (with amazing guest speakers!)**...

Each Sunday in Advent we will have a Zoom Education Hour that will be great for youth and adults at 10:30am. Here’s the schedule:

- **Sunday, November 29: Artists Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity and Hannah Garrity of A Sanctified Art** sharing about our “Those Who Dream” Advent theme and their creative process.
- **Sunday, December 6: Dr. John P. Burgess, Professor of Theology at Pittsburgh Seminary** presenting on how we can understand the day’s scripture and the season of Advent.
- **Sunday, December 13: Rev. Sarah Are and Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman of A Sanctified Art** leading us in a “Those Who Dream” Advent poetry reading and Visio Divina (artistic reflection) using a piece of art created for this series!
- **Sunday, December 20: Dr. Martha Moore-Keish, Professor of Theology at Columbia Seminary** teaching us about a Reformed understanding of Mary in the Christmas story and our day’s scripture.

**Join Zoom Meeting:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87257712695?pwd=UUR2VzJJJeHVwREk4dEx0K0oxV1k3UT09>

Meeting ID: 872 5771 2695 | Passcode: advent20

**Daily Devotional...** Our Those Who Dream series comes with a church wide devotional that includes creative reflections on scripture each day! I hope our church will commit to daily readings and devotional time. You may use the devotional via PDF link on your phone or other devices, or you may pick up a hard-copy from the Parking Lot Entry of the church on Monday, November 30 between 9a-12p or 4p-6p, or Tuesday, December 1 between 9a-12p or 3:00-5:30p.

**Reverse Advent Calendar Food Pantry Collection...** Using a creative and fun “Reverse Advent Calendar,” you are invited to collect one item for our Westminster Food Pantry each day of Advent. After Christmas, filled boxes may be dropped off at the church or you may arrange for WPC Youth to safely pick up from your doorstep. More information will be shared in worship and e-Vines on pick-up details.

As people who dream, our faith, worship, growth, and service continue while we actively anticipate the good news of Christmas. Westminster family, dreamers, join us on this journey of hope, peace, joy and love that is Advent 2020!

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Chris Peters

## The Heritage League Holiday of Trees

The 48<sup>th</sup> annual Holiday of Trees, sponsored by The Heritage League Woman’s Club will not be held at Westminster this year. Instead, it’s going to be a virtual event. The Heritage League club made the decision due to the public safety concerns brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. You will be able to view many beautiful and uniquely decorated Christmas trees at your leisure from your own home for three weeks! The trees will be displayed on the website: [TheHeritageLeagueofLincoln.org](http://TheHeritageLeagueofLincoln.org) beginning December 9 through December 30. You can view and like them on Facebook: “The Heritage League”.







## Installation Sunday Service

Westminster, Thank you! I am so grateful for a wonderful, albeit unusual, Installation Sunday on Sunday, November 1! We hosted an incredible commission from Homestead Presbytery, and they all commended our church for our creativity and joy as we formally entered this new season with me as your Pastor.

For those who ran sound cables and set out bulletins, I give thanks. For those who bundled up and worshiped in chairs or cars, I give thanks. For those who prayed or were there in spirit due to other commitments, I give thanks. For Westminster, I give thanks!

While I never imagined being Installed in our parking lot, I give thanks for each of you and for the wonderful afternoon together. And, for an exciting 2021 “spoiler alert,” sometime near the one-year anniversary of our outdoor installation we will be planning a special reception with another guest preacher, as we hope and believe by then we will be worshipping together in our sanctuary once again.

For that past Sunday Installation, for our ministry today, and for our future ahead – I give thanks!

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Chris Peters





## Virtual Communion

**Sunday, December 6, 2020**

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.



Worship will also be televised on Spectrum channel 1302 and Windstream channel 13 at 12:30 PM on Thursday and 1:00 PM on Saturday. Download your Online Worship Bulletin at <https://westminsterlincoln.org/worship-bulletins/> . Watch Lincoln Westminster Presbyterian Church Virtual Worship Videos at <https://westminsterlincoln.org/youtube-videos/> .

## Luke Bible Study by Zoom

Adult Education has been sponsoring Bible Study by Zoom for most of the weeks since the pandemic began. First, we were led by Sarah Baltensperger through the book of Genesis. Then, this fall we began studying the Gospel of Luke, led by Pastor Jimmy Shelbourn. These are on Wednesdays at 7 p.m. Each group of readings is informed by an introductory video. The group will conclude Luke Part One on December 2 and take a holiday break until January 13. That session on January 13 will begin Luke Part Two at Luke 19:28. All participants are asked to watch the video: “BibleProject Luke Part Two” (just Google that title) before January 13. To receive the Zoom link and register for the next class, email Tom Pappas at [tpappas@windstream.net](mailto:tpappas@windstream.net).

## Mission and Outreach Coat, Hat & Glove Drive

We will be collecting new or gently used items only. Saturday, December 5th, 12th, and 19th in the church parking lot from 1-3 pm. If you want to give but can not deliver items to the church, please call, txt, or email Gary and Glenna Haller. They will be happy to pick up your donations at your home. All sizes welcome. Contact info: 817-757-2980, or [txhaller2@att.net](mailto:txhaller2@att.net).



**Special Needs for Matt Talbot:** Men's coats - L and XL (Hand & Foot warmers are also welcome).

# Westminster Preschool

Is there any better illustration of the word "expectant" than watching young children wait for Christmas to arrive? As we enter the Advent season, expectantly waiting for the coming of our Savior, the preschool is enjoying and sharing the blessings this year has brought.

Westminster Preschool believes every child deserves a safe nurturing environment where children can develop spiritually, emotionally, socially, physically, cognitively, and culturally. Our mission is to create a caring, loving, Christian community where children have an opportunity to grow socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, cognitively, and culturally. This is the philosophy and mission of our school. As we look to further cultivate the kind, generous hearts of the children in our school, we are incorporating several servant events into our preparations for the beautiful holiday season.

During our STEAM classes, a common question has been, "Hey, what's behind that big door?" That has provided the opportunity to discuss the kind helpers in the Westminster Church community that show God's love by helping provide food for others who are hungry. Our students and families have been given the opportunity to come alongside these amazing helpers by providing items on the food pantry list for donation at our Thanksgiving Chapel Chat.

We have amazingly creative artists, writers and craft creators who find great joy in sharing their creations with others! We will be using this generosity to partner with our friends at Lancaster Rehabilitation Center in a pen pal program beginning with the holiday season, but continuing through the year. Our caring tree items this year will also be items that benefit the residents. We look forward to the mutual blessings this partnership will produce!

The classrooms will be filled with the normal, joyous sounds of excited children, tree decorating contests, one-of-a-kind gift creations and probably a holiday mask or two. Before we leave for Christmas break to celebrate Christ's birth with our families, we are going to celebrate the end of the semester with a pizza party! Our wonderful friend, Jenny Gegg, has been gifting our school with her amazing photography talents for years, and donated back a portion of school picture sales that will be used to fund our pizza party! We are so grateful for her!

The Westminster Church community dedicates their time and talents to the preschool in a multitude of ways, and we are so appreciative. Most recently, Gary and Glenna Haller dedicated their time using a new method to cover our classroom windows for the cold-weather season. Rather than covering with a plastic wrap, a piece of plexi-glass was cut to fit each window, blocking the cool air but still allowing a clear view to the outdoors. What a wonderful gift!

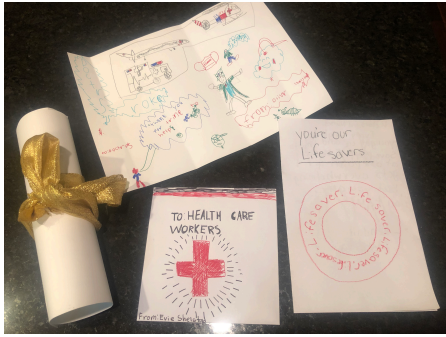
Westminster Preschool wishes you all a peaceful, healthy, contemplative Advent season, and maybe a healthy dose of child-like joy!





## Westminster Families Say “Thank You” to Local Hospital Workers

Health care providers in the Lincoln hospitals are feeling overwhelmed. As coronavirus cases in our community surge, Westminster families felt called to extend appreciation to front-line workers for the challenging work that they are doing.



Faith Village families made handmade cards thanking hospital workers for their hard work. Middle School families gathered in the church parking lot to make Lifesaver notes. “We appreciate you!” and “Thank you for all you do!” labels were placed on 1200 rolls of Lifesavers, which were delivered to Bryan East and Bryan West hospitals. Afterwards, s’mores were enjoyed over portable fire pits.



Many thanks to the families who responded to this need in our community.

Blessings to All!





## **The Nebraska Presbyterian Foundation awarded \$254,025 this fall to 11 nonprofit organizations in Lancaster and Platte Counties. As Presbyterians, we can be proud of these efforts.**

The grants strengthen communities by funding programs that create pathways to greater self-sufficiency and empowerment. These included:

### **Asian Community & Cultural Center | \$60,000**

Funding for a van to transport elders who utilize the Center's health, social and case management programs.

### **Bridges to Hope | \$10,000**

Support for those re-entering society after incarceration.

### **Catholic Social Services | \$20,000**

Funding for emergency services and food pantry programs.

### **Clinic with a Heart | \$20,000**

Support for the free health care clinic serving the underserved and underinsured.

### **Columbus Center for Survivors | \$20,000**

Support for domestic violence victims.

### **Columbus Rescue Mission | \$10,000**

Support to help alleviate homelessness and food insecurity in the community.

### **Food Bank of Lincoln | 25,000**

Funding for food and personal care items.

### **Good Neighbor Community Center | \$25,000**

For programs that address hunger, homelessness, education and resettlement.

### **HopeSpoke | \$9,025**

Funding services for Vietnamese elders.

### **Tabitha | \$45,000**

Support for Meals on Wheels, which provides a daily meal for vulnerable and at-risk people regardless of their ability to pay.

### **Voices of Hope | \$10,000**

Support for domestic violence crisis intervention.

## **Help Stock the Westminster Food Pantry**

During the Season of Advent, please consider participating in Westminster's Reverse Advent Calendar. Unlike traditional Advent calendars in which you receive a gift each day, this activity has you give a gift each day. The activity can be done either personally or as a family.

Specifically, we will be asking our members to place food items in a box throughout the month of December. See the Reverse Advent Calendar on the adjacent page for a list of the requested food items. These items will be used to stock the Westminster Food Pantry, which in turn provides food to families in need. Details will follow in the eVine as to how to drop off your box or call to have it picked up. Join us in preparing our hearts and minds for Christmas by remembering the needs in our community.

# Reverse Advent Calendar

EACH DAY ADD AN ITEM TO A BOX. ON CHRISTMAS EVE, DONATE THE CONTENTS TO THE WESTMINSTER FOOD PANTRY.

- December 1: box of cereal
- December 2: peanut butter
- December 3: pancake mix
- December 4: boxed potatoes
- December 5: macaroni and cheese
- December 6: canned peaches
- December 7: bar of soap
- December 8: canned tuna or chicken
- December 9: ravioli or spaghetti o's
- December 10: applesauce
- December 11: pancake syrup
- December 12: canned pears
- December 13: canned kidney beans, chili beans, etc.
- December 14: box of crackers
- December 15: box of Jello
- December 16: oatmeal
- December 17: pasta
- December 18: spaghetti sauce
- December 19: chicken noodle or tomato soup
- December 20: creamed soup
- December 21: canned corn
- December 22: canned mixed vegetables
- December 23: pork & beans
- December 24: canned green beans



## Pass the Light of Christ this Christmas

You're invited to pass the light of Christ this Christmas... virtually!

Each individual or family will record themselves passing the light from the comfort of your own home. Recordings can be made from smartphones, computers, tablets, or digital cameras, and the deadline for submission is Sunday, December 6.

Completed videos can be uploaded here: <https://www.dropbox.com/request/BuYOG5CsihUO6WZi5zCY>

And an instructional video is available here: <https://youtu.be/hUOnpGLirhE>

## Tis the season!

**Westminster's Green@Heart** is once again collecting Styrofoam packaging and broken string lights for recycling.

**We can't accept disposable food containers or packing peanuts, but start now saving those blocks of foam that come with your purchases and gifts.** And as you decorate, hold on to the lights that no longer work. Together we can keep piles of wire and white stuff out of the landfill. Drop-offs for both foam and lights start the week after Christmas. Watch the eVine for more information.



## Prayer Requests

For prayer requests, concerns and praises, please send email to: [prayer@westminsterlincoln.org](mailto:prayer@westminsterlincoln.org).

Requests will be forwarded to the Prayer Ministry Group. If you would like to be a part of the Prayer Ministry Group, please email your name, phone number and your email address to:

[prayer@westminsterlincoln.org](mailto:prayer@westminsterlincoln.org).

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





## 2020 Poinsettia Donation Form

Share the joy of Christmas! This year we will be ordering a reduced number of poinsettias to place in the sanctuary for the recording of the Christmas Eve service. You can make a donation in memory or in honor of a loved one, to be displayed in the online bulletin for Christmas Eve.

The donation level is \$15. Please make checks payable to Westminster and write **POINSETTIA** on the memo line. Donations must be received by **Dec. 14** to be included in the order of worship.

Mail your check and this form with the information specified below to:

**Westminster Presbyterian Church**

**Attn: Joanne**

**2110 Sheridan Blvd., Lincoln, NE 68502**

\_\_\_\_ I would like to donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ toward the purchase of poinsettias.

\_\_\_\_ I would like to donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to the Westminster Library.

Given by: \_\_\_\_\_

In memory of:

\_\_\_\_\_

In honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_



Westminster Presbyterian Church

2110 Sheridan Blvd

Lincoln, NE 68502



## COFFEE WITH REV. CHRIS PETERS

*Coffee with Chris* will take a break during December in order to host the Adult Educational Advent Series.

You are invited to join our Zoom Virtual Coffee Meeting with Rev. Chris Peters and your congregation friends virtually on Sundays at 10:30 am each week, starting back up on January 3, 2021.

**Join the Zoom Meeting at:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86970981397?pwd=ZmdicnlLUXFkZ1RMOGI0b3pnUStWQT09>

**Meeting ID:** 869 7098 1397

**Passcode:** wpccoffee