

October
2021



Would you like to
join the Music
Ministry? See page 8
for details.

worship
WITH US

WORSHIP WITH US
IN THE SANCTUARY
OR ONLINE
ON SUNDAYS



SUNDAY COMMUNION
SANCTUARY | OCT. 3
VIRTUAL | OCT. 10

THE MESSENGER



Reverse Offering, Sunday Sept. 12, 2021. See page 9.

Westminster Church Family,

October marks the beginning of the Stewardship season in the life of our church, which can serve as a time for us all to look ahead to the good that God has in store. The term stewardship originates from a term that quite literally means “house guardian,” or someone in charge of a particular place, task, or resource.

As Christians, we recognize that the resources of our lives and of this world are in many ways not “our own,” and as Presbyterians we affirm that part of our response to God’s grace is to be good stewards – or managers – of the resources of this one life we get to live.

Stewardship in the life of the church is a time where we determine what resources we might have available to “give back” to the life of the church to the glory of God. That might include the resource of your time, and so stewardship season can be a time to consider how you might volunteer in an area of church life. That might include the resource of your finances, and so stewardship season can be a time to consider what financial commitment you might make to the church in the coming year.

I’ll name it – it can feel awkward when we start talking about finances in the life of the church, but giving allows Westminster to grow and live into the vision we have for our future as an “inclusive faith family.” I can’t overemphasize the importance of giving toward our budget as a means to reach our big picture goals in tangible, everyday ways. Making a pledge toward our 2022 budget this Fall will allow for budget planning to include robust education for all ages, skilled staffing and flourishing resources, committee empowerment to care for all members and visitors, mission and outreach engagement in our neighborhoods, crucial building maintenance in our historic facility, guest musicians at special services – and so much more! The Peters household will be assessing our giving to the life of Westminster and making a commitment for 2022, and I invite your household to do the same.

In our worship services from October 10th through November 7th, we will hear from members of our church family as they share about ways Westminster has impacted their lives and ways we seek to “make a Westminster difference” in the world around us. There’s no doubt we want to give to the places in our lives that have a sense of purpose and help give our lives meaning. Hearing those stories may serve as a reminder of how being a part of our Westminster church family has given your own life a sense of purpose and meaning. On November 7th, we will commit our gifts to God for 2022 in our worship service. I hope that you will embrace this year’s Stewardship season as an opportunity to re-commit your own resources of time and finances.

As we have seen in the recent months, our church is increasing in vibrancy and life with a great future ahead! I hope you will support that future by considering how to give back in response to God’s grace and Westminster’s presence in your life!

With Gratitude,
Pastor Chris

Life Group Gatherings

Adult Education Bible Study of Acts of the Apostles

Join us via Zoom for Bible Study on Wednesdays. Contact Tom Pappas to enroll and get the Zoom Meeting information. This group is open to all who wish to attend and learn about scripture book by book.

Hearts & Hands | Church Library | Wednesdays 1:30 -3:00 PM & 6:30 - 8:00 PM

Feel free to bring anything you'd like to work on. Some creative things you can enjoy doing with your hands are coloring, rock painting, embroidery, knitting, and stitching. Men and women and ALL craft projects welcome! Questions: Call Francy Scheele at (402) 310-4212.

Lunch Bunch | Toast| Tuesday, October 5 | 11:30 a.m.

Lunch Bunch will be meeting at Toast, 570 Fallbrook Blvd suite 105. All are welcome.

Ladies Night Out | MoMo's | Monday, October 18 | 5:00 – 7:00 PM

Ladies Night out will be at MoMo's Pizzeria located at 7701 Pioneers Blvd, Lincoln, NE. Please feel free to bring a friend, sister, aunt, daughter or mother to all our gatherings.

Faith and Cancer Support Group | Church Library Tuesday, October 19 | 7 PM

Cancer is associated with many emotions wrapped up within. In our support group at Westminster we can share those thoughts and feelings with others who are experiencing similar concerns. All are welcome. Contact Janice Rohwedder 402 730-5568.

Prairie Readers | Wednesday, October 20 | Fellowship Hall | 1:00 p.m.

Pat Leach, Director of Lincoln City Libraries and a member of Westminster, will come to talk about books she selects from this year's Notable Books as compiled by the American Library Association. All are invited.

Messenger Articles Reminder:

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



Children and Youth Committee Activities

Wednesday Nights | 5:30-7:00 PM

Wednesday activities continue from 5:30-7:00 PM. Kids from nursery age through middle school are invited to join us for dinner, fellowship, discussion, and fun. Coffee and fellowship opportunities for parents will be available as well.

Faith Village kids are exploring the Bible through science throughout October. Kids will be investigating the Parting of the Red Sea, Pressure Cookers, Walking on Eggshells, and Walking on Water.

Planning for the Middle School Youth Group is still fluid, though they will have a trunk and be helping with Spooktacular and a trip to the Roca Scary Farm is likely. Stay to celebrate the start of the new season with your Westminister family.

Youth Sermon Set-up

Youth are invited to take part in a sermon set-up discussion on Sunday mornings. We will review the lectionary Bible verse and discuss the theme prior to the service. Youth are invited to attend service with their families or together in the balcony.



High School Youth Group

The High School Youth Group meets on Sunday evenings, 7:00 PM-8:30 PM. Join us for discussion, service, fun, fellowship, and more.

Spooktacular

On Wednesday, October 27 at 5:30, cowboys, princesses, and creatures of the night are invited to slither, shuffle, or ride on down to Westminister to play games, trick or treat, and have a frightfully fun evening.

Here are a few of the activities you can look forward to: Trick-or-treating, Bounce House, Pumpkin Bowling, Pumpkin Decorating, Costume Contest & more.

See page 6 for details on how you can sign up to host a car trunk or volunteer to staff a game or craft table.

Faith Village

In October, we are looking at how Moses brought Freedom to the Hebrews. Please be sure we have all the information we need about your child by registering here <https://forms.gle/6bc1PSDmRBipe336A>.

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28)

When you hear the name "Moses," what comes to mind first? Crossing the red sea? The burning bush? A baby in a basket, floating down the Nile? The Ten Commandments? The plagues? His final speech in Deuteronomy (Did you know that the book of Deuteronomy is just one big, long speech by Moses?).

Regardless of which story comes to mind first, it's clear that Moses is an important figure in the Bible. His life is another great example of the verse from Romans about God working for the good of those called to his purpose. Here is a quick review of the story:

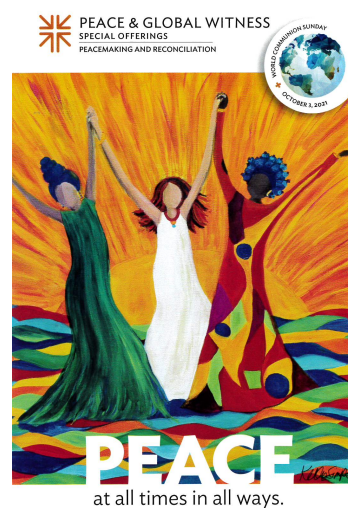
Moses first appears as a baby, floating in the Nile River. The Egyptian Pharaoh, concerned that the population of Hebrew slaves was increasing too quickly, ordered all of their male babies to be killed. To save her son's life, Moses' mother put him in a basket and sent him down the river. The Pharaoh's daughter saw the baby, took him from the river, adopted him, and raised him as an Egyptian prince.

One day, Moses saw an Egyptian overseer beating a Hebrew slave. Angered, he tried to stop the beating but accidentally killed the man. Fearing the consequences, he ran into the wilderness. While there, he worked as a shepherd until God spoke to him from a burning bush. God told Moses he had been chosen to lead the Hebrews out of slavery and to "a land flowing with milk and honey."

Moses returned to Egypt, as God had commanded, and asked the Pharaoh to let the Hebrews go. The Pharaoh refused ten times and ten times God sent a different plague. After the tenth plague, Pharaoh let the Hebrews go. He quickly changed his mind, however, and sent soldiers after the fleeing people. The Hebrews found themselves stuck at the edge the Red Sea, unable to go forward because of the water and unable to go back because of the soldiers. But God answered Moses' call and parted the sea for his people to cross. Once they were safe, the sea came crashing back.

We will be using activities from Mission, Art, Cooking, Games, Science, and more in our explorations as we look at God's great works and how Moses overcame his fear with faith. Look for the family letters we will be sending home for more details on our lessons.

Peace & Global Witness Special Offerings



Special Offerings will be collected on World Communion Sunday, October 3rd. Donations can also be sent to the church anytime before then. Indicate "Peace Offering" in the subject line of the check or donation via other means.

Upcoming Events

Elders of the Earth Retreat

Please consider attending this remarkable and important event during October 12, 13, and 14. This will be the 6th annual retreat and will be held via Zoom. This year's theme is **"What's Unique About Nebraska In Light of the Climate Crisis"**.

Have a look at the website <https://elders4theearth.com/> while you're thinking about all the ways Nebraska is unique.



Green @Heart

Dr. Katherine Hayhoe is a conservative Christian, well-known for her ability to connect action on climate change to values, whether those values are love of God's creation, love for children and grandchildren, or something else. As a highly regarded climate scientist, she's also learned the best ways to have respectful, persuasive conversations about climate change. She'll highlight key points of her new book, *Saving Us: A Climate Scientist's Case for Hope and Healing in a Divided World* (release date 9/21/21). Zoom in to <https://www.firstplymouth.org/cat>

Spooktacular | October 27, 5:30-7:30 PM

You can help us make this event possible in a couple of ways:

- 1) Please consider donation bags of candy, packaged snacks, pencils, and/or any small handouts for the children. Look for collection buckets at the top of the steps by the East entrance.
- 2) Wear a costume and decorate your car trunk with a fun theme then pass out treats to the children.
- 3) Volunteer to staff a game or craft table.

Vehicles need to arrive by 4 pm to find a spot and put the finishing touches on your decorations. Contact Sarah Baltensperger (sarah.baltensperger@gmail.com) or Stacy Graham (sgraham@appliedsystems.com) with any questions.

Sign up online to provide a trunk or volunteer to help with crafts, refreshments, or the bounce house here: <https://forms.gle/uZWNNEMCzYVMbypn9>, or call the church at 402-475-6702.

Volunteer Spotlight: Sarah Baltensperger

"I feel very blessed to be a part of this wonderful church!"

From ushers and greeters to children, youth, and adult group leaders and everyone else in-between, Westminster volunteers use their God-given gifts to serve others on a daily basis. This committed group of individuals make everything we do here at Westminster possible. This month our spotlight is on another incredibly gifted and generous individual, Sarah Baltensperger.

Sarah has been a member of Westminster since 2005, and started volunteering the day after she became a member! She works at Perceptyx as an Operations Manager and loves to read, listen to podcasts, and spend time with her family.

She has been married to her husband, Rob, who is an assistant principal at Lincoln Southeast High School since 2008. Sarah and Rob have three children: Sam (11), Reese (9) and Addie (9). Sam just started middle school at Irving while Reese and Addie attend Rousseau Elementary. All three kids are quite passionate about sports.

Sarah has served in many capacities throughout her years at Westminster. She has been a member of the Children Youth and Family Committee, Personnel Committee, A&P Committee, and Mission and Outreach Committee. In addition, she has served as a Sunday School Teacher, taken part in the Turning Pages Jail Ministry, been a Deacon and an Elder, and helped ring bells with the Bell Carillion.

Sarah says that all her volunteer activities have all been meaningful in different ways. For example, she enjoyed working in the children's areas because children are the future of the church, but she also loved the opportunity to have the Turning Pages book club with women at the local jail. Most recently, she has found that she loves serving as a Deacon and watching over her 'flock'.



Sarah sees being a volunteer as an opportunity for people to get involved and make a positive impact on Westminster. She recalls being touched by so many of her experiences, from watching a child learn something new in Sunday School to working together with members of the congregation on a mission project to serving as a deacon to our flocks, that no one particular experience can serve as the most meaningful. "It is," Sarah says, "more the sum of the whole; the ability to make a difference."

Why volunteer? Sarah says she volunteers because "God has given us so many gifts; what better way than to use them at Westminster! We were created in his image, which empowers us to serve others. I think it's important to be involved and participate in the life of the church." But it is not just about serving others. Through volunteering, Sarah has learned about herself, and has noticed that some activities that used to be intimidating, like reading the liturgy or teaching a lesson, are no longer intimidating. Volunteering has taught her to stretch and challenge herself to do new/different things, and in so doing, to realize that she might have gifts in previously unidentified areas.

Volunteer Spotlight Continued

Sarah says she used to think that she did not have the time to volunteer. One of her favorite sayings was "Volunteers may not always have the time, but they have the heart!" But over time, she realized that even volunteering for little pockets of time here and there can make a big impact. To those thinking about volunteering, Sarah would encourage them to find something they might be interested in, or a way to contribute and to give it a try! Until you do, it is impossible to understand the incredible reward and fulfillment that can come with getting involved. There are so many opportunities to serve at Westminster and in the community; literally, there is something for everyone!

If you're wondering where you fit in and what it means to live on mission, consider volunteering to serve in our children or youth ministry. Whatever your interests or gifts are, we can use you. Complete the volunteer form here <https://forms.gle/ffJLjZbMzw2qjEUg6> to get started.

Online Choir Rehearsals

Westminster Choir will embark on a new adventure with virtual Zoom rehearsals this fall! Due to the small time lag that exists through the internet, rehearsal format will also be different. Much of our singing will involve leader demonstration while choir members are muted. This is perfect for beginners or anyone who has been away from singing for a while. All are welcome to sing-a-long with Laura on Wednesday evenings.

Email laura@westminsterlincoln.org for zoom meeting details.

Westminster Carillon

We are excited to return to ringing this fall! We love to welcome new members, and prior music reading experience is helpful.

Contact laura@westminsterlincoln.org to express interest.

Instrumental Soloists

Do you play a non-wind instrument? We would love for you to share your gifts with the congregation for special music this fall.

Contact laura@westminsterlincoln.org for more information.



We would like to extend a warm welcome to our new youth director, Bailey Jex.

Bailey is not a new face at Westminster nor is she new on staff. Bailey attended confirmation at Westminster and has been a member of the congregation since 2011, as well as serving as a long-term volunteer with the youth and as nursery staff. She will be contacting youth in the next few weeks and will begin leading youth group on Wednesday, September 15. We are excited to have her take on this new role. Look for more information from and about Bailey in the next Messenger.

Westminster Reverse Offering

On Sunday, September 12th the “surprise” Pastor Chris had been building up was revealed as a Reverse Offering! Each household in worship was given an envelope with \$50 cash and encouraged to use it to love your neighbor by supporting someone in need or an organization that does so directly. The entirety of the reverse offering funds came from our 2020 budget surplus. We were also featured on KLKN with this news! Please see the link below for that story. If you were not in worship on September 12th, your household is still invited to receive an envelope on a Sunday morning or by making a request to the church office. Please report your stories of how you used the money to office@westminsterlincoln.org. Go be a blessing!

<https://www.klknv.com/westminster-presbyterian-church-surprises-its-members-with-a-reverse-offering/>





There is nothing quite like the beginning of the school year!

The excitement, the joy, sometimes tears....that new crayon smell!! We began our 2021-2022 school year with the optimism and joy of getting to be a vital part of those incredibly important early years of so many new and returning students!

Over the summer and during the week prior to the school year, we tackled some much needed projects! Families and visitors to the preschool are now greeted with new flooring in the hallways and open spaces of the main level. What a difference! We also made some adjustments to our current spaces, to make them more efficient and useable. Our pre-k locker area is now in the open space near the bathrooms and our old locker area houses lockers for the teachers to store their belongings. Both our pre-k and preschool classes now have their own individual locker/cubbies, which helps to ease congestion and offers further separation to aid in reducing the spread of germs. Finally, our teachers now have a workroom/break space to plan and retreat to a little quiet during the course of our busy days.





Our month of September kicked off with the return of Dads and Donuts. While we were unable to welcome our dads into the classroom as in past years, our students and the special men in their lives were able to enjoy a donut breakfast together in the gym for the pre-k class or fellowship hall for our preschool class. Our students LOVED getting to spend this special time together!

We are looking forward to an exciting October of parent/teacher conferences, Pumpkin patches and costume parades!





Westminster Presbyterian Church

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It was a little damp on Sunday but that didn't stop the Westminster family from having fun. We started off by launching a food drive in Faith Village then braved the rain to tie dye shirts, make marshmallow catapults, play water balloon toss, ladder golf, and cornhole, enjoy fantastic music by the Rising, do face painting, jump in the bounce house, and relax with our friends and family. Many thanks to all our wonderful volunteers for making it possible. Thanks also to everyone who braved the rain for our official fall launch. I guess that means it really is pumpkin spice time now.

