

November  
2021



**FALL BACK!**  
**November 7**  
**Daylight Savings**  
**Time Ends**

*worship*  
**WITH US**

**WORSHIP WITH US**  
**IN THE SANCTUARY**  
**AT 9:30 AM OR**  
**ONLINE**  
**ON SUNDAYS**



**SUNDAY COMMUNION**  
**SANCTUARY | NOV. 7**  
**VIRTUAL | NOV. 14**

# THE MESSENGER



Westminster Church Family,

Our focus on gratitude since returning to in-person worship at Westminster has been intentional. For one, gratitude or thanksgiving is found throughout scripture, and scripture should always be a guide for our lives as Christians.

## **A few favorites from the New Revised Standard Version...**

### **Exodus 15:1 (The Song of Miriam, sung after the Israelites have crossed the Red Sea):**

"I will sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously;"

**Psalms 9:1** "I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds."

**Psalms 106:1** "Praise the Lord! O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever."

**Matthew 15:36 (Feeding of the 5,000):** "Jesus took the seven loaves and the fish; and after giving thanks he broke them and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds."

**Luke 22:19 (The Last Supper):** "Then Jesus took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'"

Each of these scriptures remind us of our response of thanksgiving for God's grace.

This November at Westminster, we have much for which to give God thanks on Sundays and beyond!

On November 7th, Commitment Sunday, we finish up our "Giving in Gratitude" Stewardship season as we give thanks through the act of making a pledge of our tithes and offerings for 2022. On November 21st, we will elect our new Elders and Deacons for 2022. We give thanks for those who have been called to leadership and to care for our people. On November 28th, we celebrate the beginning of the season of Advent. We are thankful for the hope to come for our lives in the Christ-child.

I get it, it seems a little strange talking about Advent at the start of November, but I want us to be prepared. In fact, Advent is the Church Liturgical Season that is all about preparation for the birth of Christ at Christmas.

This Advent, we will focus on gratitude for the opportunity to gather in-person and virtually this year. Our worship will be centered on familiar practices like Advent Wreath lighting by members of our church family, scriptures from the lectionary (3-year cycle of scriptures), and a tangible challenge to live this Advent as a time set apart from the busy-ness of our world's Christmas season (see note at bottom).

As we shift toward Christian season of Advent this November, my prayer is that we might respond to God's grace in Jesus with gratitude in all that we do - from Commitment Sunday to our Advent Workshop! Let us worship, fellowship, learn, and serve with thanksgiving and gratitude in the month ahead!

With Gratitude,  
Pastor Chris

## YOUR SESSION IN ACTION | September Meeting 2021

- Approved request of funds from the WPC Foundation to repair two leaking stained glass windows in the Sanctuary.
- Our financial situation is healthy overall. Committees are preparing budget requests for 2022. The stewardship campaign is in October.
- Approved a sanctuary request for Nebraska Trombone Ensemble (UNL group) for an undetermined Spring Saturday at 4 pm with a reception to follow.
- Guest speaker, Rev. Brian Ellison, Executive Director of the Covenant Network of Presbyterians, spoke and interacted with the Session on the topic of “What it means to *welcome well* as a congregation, and how we might live into our mission statement’s call to be ‘an inclusive faith family.’” The Network is an association of PC(USA) congregations.
  - Westminster joined the Network in 1997, the year of its founding.
  - Initially the Network was focused on advocacy for the evolution of PC(USA) policies to be more inclusive and affirming, including LGBTQ+ ordination and same-sex marriage. Today the Network focuses on education for and support of congregations in their work to be more inclusive.
  - Brian challenged us to think about how welcoming we are. He shared that welcome is about community and that inequity of access to community—systemic exclusion—is a scandal to the Gospel. We should not be complicit to such exclusion.
  - He called us to:
    - Reaffirm our call to the Covenant
    - Think about ACTION.
- The Session’s answers—signs of inclusions/steps we could take to make WPC more welcoming to ALL individuals
  - Welcome congregational conversation and education about inclusion and welcome.
  - Be open to more diverse community groups and welcome them into our spaces.
  - Update our website and communication to be clearer about our vision for inclusion.
  - Engage committees on inclusion and accessibility (for example Buildings and Grounds considering questions of ADA compliance).
  - Become a focus of the Mission and Outreach Committee
- There will be more about this in the future





# westminster preschool



**As we prepare to enter the month of gratitude, here are a few of the many things we are grateful for at Westminster Preschool:**

**T:** Our incredible, wonderful, delightful, patient, loyal, loving, amazing TEACHERS. They are the heart of our program and are changing the world one child at a time!

**H:** All of our community HELPERS that work to help us feel safe! We had an incredible opportunity to learn all about our firefighters and their tools from Station 8! Our other amazing helpers, the South Library arranged this wonderful opportunity for learning!

**A:** APPLES!! Fall is the best time to enjoy this delicious, healthy treat! A trip to the Picnic Hill Apple Orchard was a great extension of our Tree Study and the perfect way to spend time with our friends on a beautiful fall day!

**N:** NEIGHBORS!! For years, our students have loved traveling over to the South Library on Wednesdays to participate in preschool storytime. Because of COVID, this practice ended in 2020. Did you know that Mr. Greg from South Library is such a great friend to Westminster Preschool that he makes a special trip here every Tuesday afternoon to do a storytime just for us?! What amazing neighbors!

**K:** KIDS!!! Our mission is to create a caring, loving, Christian, community where children have an opportunity to grow socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, cognitively, and culturally. We are incredibly blessed to have a school filled with inquisitive, helpful, creative, unique, energetic, kind children every day. Knowing that we have the opportunity to help them grow at such a vital time in their development is an honor we don't take lightly!

**S:** SCHOOL (building)!! Thank you, Westminster Church, for opening your hearts to an early childhood learning community so many decades ago! The space we are able to utilize as we educate is such a gift. Children need a rich environment to explore and grow and the home of Westminster Church and Preschool certainly helps meet that goal!



## 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 | Asian Buffet | Tuesday, November 2 | 11:30 a.m.

Lunch Bunch will be meeting at Asian Buffet, 5130 North 27th Street. All are invited to attend. For questions, call Larry Wieskamp at 402-802-6883.

### Ladies Night Out | Billy's | Tuesday, November 30 | 5:00 – 7:00 PM

Ladies Night out will be at Billy's located at 1301 H St, Lincoln, NE 68508. Please feel free to bring a friend, sister, aunt, daughter or mother to all our gatherings.

### Faith and Cancer Support Group | Parlor | Tuesday, November 16 | 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 | Fellowship Hall | Wednesday, November 17 | 1:00 p.m.

Pat Leach, member of Westminster and Director of Lincoln City Libraries, will be present to talk about her reading from the American Library Association's 2021 Notable Books. All are welcome.

### Messenger Articles 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. And all announcements for The eVine are due to Tracy and Joanne Gabriel at [joanne@westminsterlincoln.org](mailto:joanne@westminsterlincoln.org) by 5 pm on Monday of each week.



## The Season of Gratitude

In an era where everyone has a smartphone and instant gratification is never more than a click-away, it can be difficult to practice intentional gratitude. From shopping online to scrolling through social media or even dating through an app, our overstimulation can distract us from being thankful for the blessings in our lives.

But as we all know from Pastor Chris, the Presbyterian response to grace is gratitude. And by expressing our thanks for the good things in our lives we are better able to celebrate the present, dispel negative emotions, promote inner resilience, and build a higher sense of self-worth.

That is why it is so important to not only practice intentional gratitude ourselves, but also to cultivate an attitude of thankfulness in our children. Just like us, our children have so many different distractions that constantly vie for their attention. And at times, it may even seem like teaching our children to slow-down and be thankful for what they've been given would be like trying to teach a goldfish how to play the clarinet. But in spite of these challenges, studies consistently show that **expressing thanks is one of the easiest ways to increase one's happiness. In fact, gratitude is so crucial that it is widely believed to be one of the most healthy human emotions.**

With that in mind, helping our families to be thankful is not simply a matter of politeness, but an essential life skill with serious implications for our emotional and spiritual wellbeing.

## So then just how do we begin to be more thankful?

**Notice** – Start by becoming aware of a person, place, or thing you want to appreciate.

**Think** – Start thinking about why you've been given these things. What are all the reasons why you are thankful for this person or thing?

**Feel** – When you think about these special things or people how do you feel?

**Do** – What can you do to express your gratitude for this person, place, or thing?

That last part is probably the most tricky, so let's talk for a moment about what we can 'do' to show gratitude. Here are some ideas for things we can do with our families that show gratitude while modelling an attitude of thankfulness for our children.

## Gratitude Ideas for Kids (and Grown-ups too)

1. Find a favorite Bible verse that expresses your gratitude to God
2. Invest in window paint and have your kids write what they are thankful for on a window in your house
3. Model gratitude
4. Take turns at dinner sharing one awesome thing from your day
5. At bedtime, say three things you appreciate about each other
6. In the car, play a game where you say all the things you love (color, food, movie, hobby, school class, sport, song, etc.)
7. Every Sunday share one nice thing you will do for someone this week
8. Start a gratitude journal as a family
9. Make a habit of writing thank you notes
10. Go on a gratitude scavenger hunt.
11. Volunteer to help someone in need

Whatever you choose to do during this season of giving thanks, do it regularly and consistently. As the days pass, new thinking patterns will begin to develop and you will find it easier to change your attitude towards one of thanks. So whether you are trying to help your children learn an attitude of thankfulness or if you are working on cultivating one for yourself, make this the beginning of a whole year of intentional gratitude.

## Faith Village

***"I'll take you as my people, and I'll be your God."***  
***Exodus 6:7***

Last month, we learned part of the story of Moses. In November, we leave Egypt and move into the wilderness with the Israelites. Here, we will pause to consider the Ten Commandments, "rules" God gave to Moses.

The longest psalm in the Bible, Psalm 119, is a song of praise about God's laws. In general, rules are a good thing. They provide structure for our lives and a framework for how to live well. God's laws help us know how to love and serve God, and how to live in relationship with one another.

The first, and probably most famous, set of God's laws is the Ten Commandments. Even though it's been over three thousand years since God gave the Ten Commandments to the Israelites, these basic laws about relating to God and to other people are still applicable to our lives today.

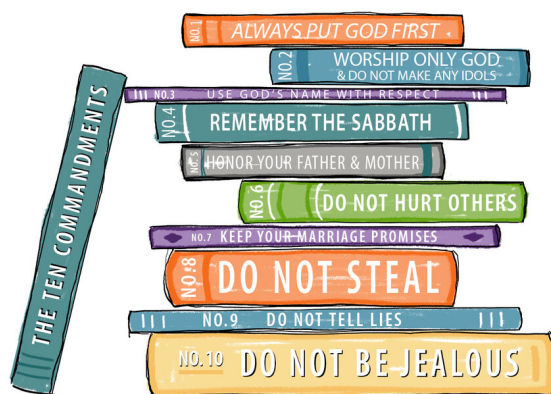
But the Ten Commandments are more than a list of dos and don'ts. These laws are about relationships, the relationship between God and us as God's chosen people, and our relationships with one another. Primarily, these commandments spell out how we are chosen as God's people and are to be loyal to God alone, and how we need to treat others with love and respect. These commandments provide a framework for living together as God's people.

## Thank You, Westminster Volunteers!

***"Nothing liberates our greatness like the desire to help, the desire to serve."*** Marianne Williamson

For every ten that watch, only one comes forward to help, and that makes a volunteer a very special kind of person. Dedicated, hardworking, innovative, and passionate, these are the people who come together to change the world. Looking at the focused and frankly amazing group of people who volunteer at Westminster, it is easy to see what volunteering at its best is all about. Each of them cares deeply, and steps up to support what they believe in, regardless of the personal cost.

Thank you to all our volunteers for being such an inspiration. Your constant and continuing efforts make all the difference.



## HOMESTEAD PRESBYTERY MEETING

- Pastor Sue Collier, First Presbyterian Church Lincoln, is the Moderator of Homestead Presbytery this year. She presided over this quarterly meeting.
- The featured speaker was Elona Street-Stewart, Co-Moderator of the 224th General Assembly (our national organization) and Synod Executive of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies (our Synod). Elona's theme was HOPE. We need hope. We give up when we lose hope. She spoke to the present reality and our need to choose realistic goals.
- Elona assured us the church at large is alive and doing well. It is embracing the concepts of Mathew 25 (look it up!), embracing dismantling structural racism, eradicating poverty and stopping hunger. Making change needs active involvement. The church is bringing real hope. The church is doing good.
- Our synod has identified funds to set up two trusts: one for indigenous people and the other for African Americans. These funds will be run by representatives of the beneficiary group and will fund non-profits and individuals. We will be able to donate to these funds. We will have other initiatives working toward restorative steps. We need to set aside Supremacy, the Wealth Gap, and Privilege.
- Stephen Earls's contract as Interim Executive Presbyter of Homestead was extended until December 2022.
- A new pastor, Erika Nelson, was voted into Presbytery as Pastor of Heritage Presbyterian Church Lincoln.





## Youth Group

“Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.” Romans 12:2 NLT

The Youth Group started out exploring the book of Ephesians in September. We talked about what it means to be the church, who is part of God’s family, how we can be a stronger team by working together, and wrapped up with a discussion on having each other’s backs and the Armor of God. We also had time to play games, take a terrifying trip to Roca Scary Farm, and help with Spooktacular. The Middle School Youth Group sponsored and staffed a highly popular Paw Patrol trunk while the High School Youth Group created an equally amazing Jurassic Park trunk.

In November, we will begin a series called “Like Me,” focused on how comparisons are damaging and how to avoid getting drawn into the comparison game. We know that teens today navigate school with more information and images to compare themselves to than ever before. Comparison often happens without anyone realizing they are doing it. In this series, we will look at what the apostle Paul has to say about leading people to aim higher than comparing themselves to everyone around them and they will learn how to follow Paul’s example by defining their lives by who Jesus says they are.

Of course, we will also have a fun night and will investigate possible service opportunities. It’s all happening at Westminster, Middle School + on Wednesday night from 5:30 PM-7:30 PM and High School + on Sunday nights from 7:00 PM-8:30 PM.



We are **Facebook** at  
[www.facebook.com/groups/  
 westminsterlincolnyouth](https://www.facebook.com/groups/westminsterlincolnyouth).

**Instagram:** @westminsteryouth.

**GroupMe; High School Youth  
 Group,** [https://groupme.com/  
 join\\_group/69532433/6MsxZbKN](https://groupme.com/join_group/69532433/6MsxZbKN)

**Middle School Youth  
 Group,** [https://groupme.com/  
 join\\_group/69672381/6dRqND1K](https://groupme.com/join_group/69672381/6dRqND1K)



### Wednesday Nights

Wednesday nights are a great opportunity for kids to get together with their friends and have fun learning about God. Kids from nursery age through middle school meet from 5:30-7:00 PM.

As we move into November, Faith Village will shift to the New Testament and begin a series called Cooking with Jesus. This month we are enjoying Fruit Pizza, Pretzels, and S'mores. Which stories about Jesus do you think we will study?

Middle School is working through a new series called "Like Me." Grades. Clothes. Athletic ability. Talent. Intelligence. There are a million ways to compare ourselves to other people. But as we'll see in this series, comparison not only keeps us from liking others, it holds us back from being able to like ourselves! And the further we move away from comparison and toward contentment, the more we'll discover, "There's no one like me."

### Faith Village

Moving into the next part of the Moses story, in November we begin a series on the Ten Commandments. No one thinks they love rules but rules provide structure for our lives and a framework for how to live well. God's laws help us know how to love and serve God, and how to live with one another most effectively.

If you have not done so already, Please be sure to register your villager here <https://forms.gle/6bc1PSDmRBipe336A>.

### 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.

### Youth Sermon Set-up

Youth are invited to take part in a sermon set-up discussion on Sunday mornings at 9:15. We enjoy donuts and juice while we discuss the theme of the upcoming sermon prior to the service. Youth are invited to attend service with their families or together in the balcony.

### Advent Workshop

**December 4, 10:30 AM-12:00 PM**

The Advent Workshop ushers in the Advent season, with crafts, cookies, and Christmas carols. This year features have a cookie competition, a coffee and cocoa bar, and crafts. Sign up to help with set-up, crafts, and clean-up <https://forms.gle/cVPa4psDS5xG4NQ09>.

Keep watching the eVine, the Messenger, Facebook, and your email for additional events and details as they become available.





## All Saints' Day 2020

### For all the saints, who from their labors rest . . .

Tom Potter, Lorraine Dougherty, John Wilson, Susie Sup, Fern Bieck, Robert Magee, Nettie Clark, Willa Mussman, Ted Forke, Patricia Zanders, Don Chandler, Gerald Gibson, Stan Wentz, Steve Menke, Lynn Davis, Bob Murphy, Tom Turner, Tom Olson, Kristyn Bennett, Katherine Wild, Chick Thorne and Don Gould.

## Annual Meeting

**Sunday, November 21, 2021**

The Annual Meeting of the Corporation and the Congregation will be held jointly during the worship service on Sunday, November 21, 2021. The purpose of the meeting will be to elect officers for 2022 and to hear the report of the corporation.

## Advent Workshop

**December 5, 2021 | 10:45 AM**

### Christmas is Coming!

It's a little scary to think about it being just around the corner– but it also brings wonderful events (besides the birth of Christ). We invite you to dive into the holiday season with the Advent Workshop, previously known as C is for Christmas. With the new name come a few changes, including moving the annual chili cookoff to Souper Bowl Sunday in January.

We will be gathering with the anticipation of great joy on the second Sunday of Advent, immediately after church to renew friendships and enjoy cookies and fellowship at the children's craft workshop.

We are still in the planning phases but will have more details in the eVine. Sign up to staff the craft tables or to help with setup or cleanup online <https://forms.gle/cVPa4psDS5xG4NQQ9> or call the church office at 402-475-6702.

## Holiday of Trees Returns

The Heritage League is once again holding their **49<sup>th</sup> annual Holiday of Trees on Thursday, Dec. 2 and Friday, Dec. 3 at Westminster. The hours are Thursday, 10 am to 8 pm and Friday, 10 am to 7 pm.** The admission price remains at \$1 per person. Tickets are available at the door. Proceeds from this year's ticket sales will go to the Friendship Home. Come and see the beautiful trees and enjoy some treats!



## What My Grandmothers Taught Me

Presbyterian Women Circles have embarked on a year-long Bible study entitled "What My Grandmothers Taught Me". In addition to the course materials provided, our library has quite a few books available for more information, both factual references and historical-type fiction. Browse through the book cart at the top of the stairs to the Garden Room and see if you find anything of interest. Items can be checked out with cards in the back of the books.



## Using funds from the 2020 surplus, Mission and Outreach has donated \$10,000 to the Lincoln Habitat for Humanity for the 2021 Faith Build project.

David and Rachel and their five children currently live in a 2-bedroom apartment with no housing assistance. When walking into the apartment, you can smell dampness. When it rains hard, the carpet and walls become wet and moldy. Window wells sometimes fill with water too. The property has switched ownership numerous times, so it has been difficult to get issues fixed. The space is overcrowded. Their family is looking forward to owning their own home where they have their own space to enjoy as a family – and their own laundry room!

Their new home will be located at Y Street and is being sponsored by Thrivent Financial and area faith organizations, including Westminster Presbyterian. The home is currently under construction.



## The Gathering Place

Westminster has supported The Gathering Place, 1443 E Street, with a team that serves meals there each month, for a number of years. This Fall, gifts to Community Action's Gathering Place will be matched \$1 for \$1. Several generous community supporters will make that match possible from now until December 31st. The Mission and Outreach team invites donations to support the \$200,000 goal. Contributions may be made to Community Action/Gathering Place, 210 O St., Lincoln, NE 68508, or [www.communityactionatwork.org](http://www.communityactionatwork.org).

## Climate Change Science: Code Red for Humanity

7-8 pm, Thur, Nov 4 via Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81544716916>

Record high temperatures and heat domes, record low temperatures and stalled Arctic jet streams, floods and droughts—all are evidence in the last year of a changing climate. Learn what we know about our future based on the past year, and brush up on the basics of climate change science. Dr. Don Wilhite, UNL Professor Emeritus and internationally known climate scientist, will review basics and discuss what climate scientists have learned in the last year.

While a few years old, the majority of the following report is current:

[Understanding and Assessing Climate Change Implications for Nebraska \(2014\)](#)



Westminster Presbyterian Church

2110 Sheridan Blvd

Lincoln, NE 68502

## ANGEL TREE

Christmas and holiday gifts are provided from the Angel Tree. These gifts are given to children from low income families. Gifts, toys, clothing, and much more is provided for disadvantaged children that range in age from infant to age 12. Senior citizens who are 60 years and older can also benefit from the Angel Tree.

Starting Oct. 20 look for the Angel tree at the top of the stairs across from the front desk. Pick a tag from the tree, shop. Return the unwrapped gifts, with the tag attached to the bag, placing them under the tree.

Gifts must be returned to the church by Dec. 12.

Most people, especially children, look forward to receiving clothing and gifts over the holidays. Will you be someone's Angel?

## Westminster Wells Project Update

As of April 1st, with the help of Westminster's generous congregation and others, we have raised \$23,038.69. The total number of wells dug so far is unknown at this time, but it is safe to say we have surpassed our 10 well goal.

Westminster Mission & Outreach is continuing to support Jim & Jodi McGill in their mission to get clean and healthy water for Niger and South Sudan. Along with supporting wells, we are now helping with the sanitation side of this project. Going forward the "African Wells Project" will be called, "African Water and Sanitation Project".

