

December
2021



**Green@Heart
Recycles Again
Lights & Styrofoam
Dec. 5**

worship
WITH US

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



**SUNDAY COMMUNION
SANCTUARY | DEC. 5
VIRTUAL | DEC. 5**

THE MESSENGER



Christmas Eve Worship Times are Friday, December 24 at 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

Westminster Family,

I have a confession to make... I'm not a big fan of waiting. For one example, I get antsy when the line at the grocery store with the least number of people ends up taking the most time.... I'm not

Today we fill our waiting times with screen time and our pauses with distractions. I say we, because I am as guilty of these realities as anyone else! And then, in the busiest time of the year, here comes Advent! A season in the life of the church that is centered on making... us...

...wait.

The good news of Advent is that our waiting as a church is active anticipation, not just sitting around. This Advent at Westminster we will actively celebrate the joy of being back together during this season as a church family after a 2020 apart! Here are a few things I'm excited about for our church in Advent 2021...

1. **Advent Workshop after church on Sunday, December 5th.** There's more information in this Messenger, but Advent Workshop is a time for all ages to gather together, decorate cookies, sign cards, and participate in crafts. Whether you're 4, 40, or 104, I hope you will join us!
2. **Advent Taize services!** At 5:30pm on the Wednesdays of December 1, 8, and 15 we will gather for a 30-minute service of reflective music and prayer. I can confirm the rumor that I will be playing guitar for some of these, and I am excited to share in that way.
3. **Sunday Adult Education** – I'll be leading a two-week class reflecting on ordinary objects that we find in scripture and in our own lives. This will be using the book *Advent In Plain Sight* by PC(USA) Pastor, Jill Duffield. I hope you'll join us after church December 12th and 19th in Fellowship Hall!
4. And, of course, **Advent Worship** at 9:30am in the Sanctuary! We will build to Christmas Eve in hopeful worship with inspiring music including guest musicians, sermons relevant to daily life, and members of our church family leading us in Advent Candle Lighting as we focus on the theme **"The Comfort of Advent: Hope, Peace, Joy, Love."**

I hope you will join us on the Sundays of Advent this year and again on Christmas Eve at 5:00pm or 7:00pm as we celebrate the very reason for our hope as a church family – Jesus Christ!

With Gratitude,
Pastor Chris

Advent in Plain Sight

Pastor Chris will present in person classes in Fellowship Hall at 10:45 after worship on December 12 and 19. This brief study is an invitation welcome the season by focusing on ordinary objects in our lives. It is based on a PC(USA) publication *Advent in Plain Sight* by Jill J. Duffield.

Quieting Ourselves for Christmas through Taize

A 30 minute Taize-type meditative service will be offered in the Chapel on three Wednesdays in December. Scripture, Candles, Silence, Simple songs and Prayer are the ingredients on December 1, 8, and 15 at 5:30pm.

Advent Workshop | December 5, 2021 | 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Advent has arrived! As we begin to move into the season of expectation and preparation, we invite you to join us at the Advent Workshop on December 5, previously known as C is for Christmas. We will be gathering with the anticipation of great joy on the second Sunday of Advent, immediately after church to renew friendships, to enjoy cookies, and to make lasting memories. You are encouraged to participate in making blessing jars and baby Jesus nutshell tree ornaments, to enjoy the hot chocolate and coffee bar, and to decorate your very own cookie. If you are feeling a little more ambitious, you can put on your baking apron and compete in the Great Cookie Bake-Off. If you are not interested in competing but would like to swap cookies, please sign up for the cookie exchange. To participate in the “cookie exchange portion” of the workshop you must sign-up in advance and bring **6 dozen of one type of your favorite holiday cookie or candy**.

To enter the cookie competition or participate in the cookie exchange, sign up here <https://forms.gle/dtc2uhpt5r25TTjn6> or email Trish at trish@westminsterlincoln.org or Laurie Lofquist at lalofquist@gmail.com.



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.

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?

YOUR HOMESTEAD PRESBYTERY MEETING NOVEMBER 2021

- Installed the new moderator, Terri Sherman.
- Stephen Earl, Presbytery Interim Executive, reported that the end of COVID restrictions means opportunity and a chance to look at everything anew. He, along with Presbytery staff, will be doing one-week residencies in various sites around the Presbytery. This will allow Presbytery staff and individual churches to more freely interact.
- Initiated a search for a Stated Clerk for the Presbytery upon the decision by the current Clerk, Raymond Meester, to retire.
- Approved the installation of a new pastor, Rev. Owen Derrick, at First Presbyterian, Tekamah. Also voted to waive certain requirements of pastorship since Rev. Derrick met those requirements in Scotland.
- Elected officers. Of interest, Pastor Chris as moderator of the Presbytery Disaster Response Team? And Margaret Sprude as a member of the Committee on Ministry. Margaret also is serving on the Search Committee for a new Stated Clerk for Homestead Presbytery.
- Approved the 2022 Budget.
- The Strategy Team reported that the consulting group, Leadership, will be assisting them in a survey of Presbytery churches as a final input for the Team as it completes its tasks. The hope is to have a final report to the Presbytery by year-end, including a staffing plan recommendation.
- Set dates for HP meeting dates for 2022: February 19, May 19, August 13, and November 17.

WORSHIP & MUSIC

The Worship & Music committee is looking for volunteers who are willing to commit to ushering once a month as a four-member team. We are hoping to have a total of 16 volunteers to usher once a month for a commitment of 6 months starting in January.

Email Kim Kubick if you would like to volunteer at kim.kubick@hotmail.com.

Adult Education offers Community Conversations in January

We'll gather in Fellowship hall at 10:45 a.m. after Worship. Our theme is "What did your institution do to cope with COVID and what are your ongoing plans while we still have an active pandemic".

Our presenters are:

January 9: Dr. Steve Joel, LPS

January 16: Dr. Rich Lloyd, Bryan School of Nursing and Executive President of Hastings College

January 23: Chief Teresa Ewins, LPD

January 30: Dr. Bob Rauner, Partnership for a Healthy Lincoln

Green@Heart Recycles Again!

Don't send styrofoam or non-functional Christmas lights to the land-fill. We will gather these items at the church again and deliver them to special recycling centers for YOU! There will be a designated box for lights beginning December 5, and foam collection will start December 19.



FAITH TO FOREST

Westminster is one of about 30 faith communities in Lincoln collaborating in a celebration next year of the 150th anniversary of Arbor Day. Here's a teaser of what's coming during January and February of 2022:

- Worship—Westminster's own special "Tree Sabbath" worship service
- Learn—a series of Thursday evening community-wide Zoom presentations
- Read—a neighborhood experience, partnering with St. Matthew's Episcopal Church in group discussion of *The Future We Choose*
- Give—an opportunity to support local and global efforts to plant trees where they are needed
- Volunteer—a new Park Department program to train pruners and munchers
- Taste—acorns and sassafras tea? Not!

Google the community-wide events on the Faith to Forest website hosted at "Faith to Forest First Plymouth" and watch for full details of Westminster's plans in the January Messenger.

To view the plans to date, go to www.westminsterlincoln.com and click on the PDF Downloads for special events under the WORSHIP tab.



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.

Presbyterian Woman's Circle 4 will meet at the Green Gateau on Monday, December 6, at 5:30 pm for a Christmas celebration.

Lunch Bunch | Mazatlan | Tuesday, December 7 | 11:30 a.m.

Lunch Bunch will be meeting at Mazatlan, located at 211 N 70th. All are invited to attend. For questions, call Larry Wieskamp at 402-802-6883.

Prairie Readers | Fellowship Hall | Wednesday, December 15 | 1:00 p.m.

Prairie Readers will meet in Fellowship Hall to watch a Christmas film. No book for this month. All are welcome.

Faith and Cancer Support Group | Parlor | Tuesday, December 21 | 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.

Ladies Night Out | Napoli's | Thursday, December 30 | 5:00 – 7:00 PM

Ladies Night out will be at Napoli's on South 48th Street (48th & Hwy 2). Feel free to bring a friend, sister, aunt, daughter and/or mother to all our gatherings.

Messenger Articles Reminder:

All information for The 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.



Faith Village

"Your savior is born today in David's city. He is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:11

Last month we learned about God's good rules for our best lives, the Ten Commandments. This month, we enter into a season meant for wonder, joy, and breathless anticipation. The story of Jesus's birth is familiar to most of us but one that is, ultimately, new each year. This month we will talk about how Jesus came at Christmas not as a one-off miracle, but as the continuation of the big story that God has been telling since He created the world; God wants to be with us and always has. When we celebrate Advent, we are celebrating that God made a way to be with His people first in the Old Testament, then through the physical presence of Jesus on earth and now, with us through His Spirit who dwells in us. Always and forever God wants to be with us, that's what Immanuel means, "God with us".

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

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.

Youth Group

All Youth Group Members are welcome to attend Wednesdays, 5:30 PM-7:30 PM. or Sundays, 7-8:30 PM.

December

The Youth group will assist with the Advent Workshop and the Angel Tree, have a Christmas party, and will finish the Like Me series by looking at how to handle the "if I were only" mindset. Paul's advice from the book of Romans is simple, "Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world." (Romans 12:2a)

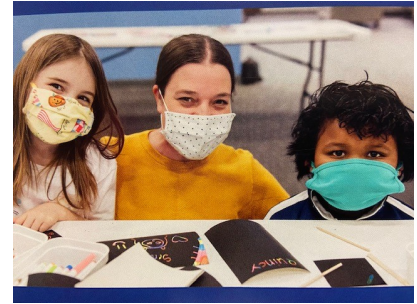
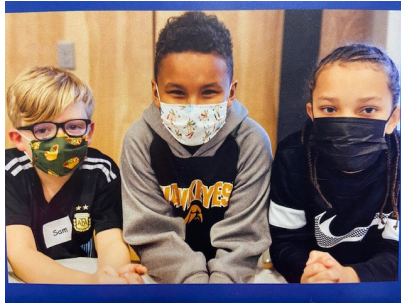
January

We will have a Lock-in January 2-3 and will begin a new series this month called "Faith in an Anxious World." We are also tentatively planning to go skiing or sledding on January 17 at Crescent Hills. Please watch Groupme or the eVine for more information.



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.



It's the MOST wonderful time of the year...and what a joyous time it is as we prepare and wait to celebrate the coming of our Savior! The air is filled with anticipation and excitement in the preschool as the air chills and the decorations begin to go up. There is often talk of what will go on that special list, which Christmas treat is their favorite, and the learning of Christmas hymns and carols. It is with great joy that we learn about how incredible God's love for us is, that He'd send His only Son to be born as a baby in that lowly manger.

As eagerly as these sweet kiddos await opening their gifts, they are so generous in their giving! The teachers leave school each day with their bags filled with handcrafted treasures from the art center and notes written with care and love! As we teach sharing, empathy and kindness as part of our social emotional curriculum, our students are eager to find ways to put this knowledge into practice!

As an extension of our classroom learning, we like to do a service project as part of our family engagement. This year, we will be participating in Gifts of Love, Christmas with Dignity for City Impact. Families will have the opportunity to donate gifts or gift wrap supplies that will be made available for City Impact youth to "buy" for their families. For more information, go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JGuexvGYaEY>.

Whatchamacallit Wednesdays

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 5:30-7:30 PM.

As we move into Advent, Faith Villagers will be exploring the Christmas story through an escape room themed series called "Escape from Bethlehem." We sometimes forget what an adventure the birth of Jesus really was: with frightening encounters, long-distance journeys, and an angry and dangerous king.

This series will attempt to capture some of the energy of these events and invite kids to engage with the Christmas story with fun escape-room-themed challenges.

Wondering what to expect for dinner?

The "Amazing Zanders" have assembled a menu to help you out. Here is what will be on the table Wednesday nights in December:

December 1

Mac n Cheese
Baby carrots
Orange slices

December 8

Walking Tacos
Warm Cinnamon Apples

December 15

Chicken Nuggets
Roasted red potatoes
Bananas

Volunteer Spotlight: Stacy Graham

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

“Everyone has gifts to share and every gift is important,” says Stacy Graham, a long term Westminster volunteer. “Volunteering can be something small because every little bit helps. I’ve learned that even though I’m busy, I can find time to volunteer in different ways here and there.”

Stacy joined Westminster in 2007 and started volunteering right away as an usher. Since then, she has helped in Faith Village and the Food Pantry, served as an elder and deacon, and has been on the Nominating Committee, Stewardship Committee, and the Children and Youth Committee. Her favorite volunteer role has been serving on the Children and Youth Committee, and she particularly enjoys helping with events for kids, like vacation Bible school.

When not volunteering, Stacy works at Applied Systems in the accounting department and has a passion for golf. She spent many years coaching college golf at Nebraska Wesleyan University, although now she just plays for fun. The rest of her time these days is spent driving her 13-year old son, Colton, to sport events and practices. Colton is a 7th grader at Moore Middle School and they live with their mini golden-doodle, Ruby. Stacy and Colton are also frequent foster dog parents, which is another way that Stacy has found to give back to her community.

Stacy says that “Volunteering makes life more meaningful. It has definitely connected me to the church. You feel like a part of the whole when you contribute.” Stacy also hopes that she is setting a good example for her son, and her favorite volunteer opportunities are those she can share with him.



What does she get out of volunteering? “It’s so rewarding! I love seeing smiles on the kids’ faces when we put on a fun event.”

And to those thinking about volunteering, Stacy recommends to “Start small and you may find out you love it.”

Fun facts about Stacy:

- Favorite ice cream flavor? Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough
- Dream vacation destination? Ireland
- Favorite sports team? Colton likes the Cubs & the Steelers, so she cheers for them too
- Favorite board game? Rummikub
- Favorite movie/TV show? Tin Cup though she likes watching lots of things on Netflix
- Favorite Bible verse? Proverbs 3: 5-6

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.

Hearts & Hands Annual Giving

Westminster's Hearts & Hands group is feeling so blessed!! Their knitted & crocheted items had a Special Blessing by Pastor Chris on Sunday, November 7th. Their annual count took place on November 10th with 223 items finished for People's City Mission! Two large bags were delivered to the People's City Mission.

Pastor Tom met us at the door & joined us for a picture! Two of our Heart & Hands members delivered the items on that rainy afternoon. We began our mission work for next years giving again that following week.

Recently, we were informed by a Westminster friend, about a couple from India. They were worshipping at a neighboring church and are expecting a new baby in December. We discovered they are with many needs. Our group put together a bag of knitted items for the baby & parents.

Our mission is one of service for others. It's been a great year!



Pictured above: Pam Wealand, Mission staff member, Pastor Tom, and Cathy Hershberger



We are grateful for all the new members & all of our church support. You are welcome drop in or join Hearts & Hands.

We meet every week on Wednesdays from 1:30 -3:00 p.m. and from 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

You can come to one meet up or both. It's up to you.

Reverse Advent Calendar

EACH DAY, PLEASE ADD AN ITEM BELOW TO A BOX
(OFFICE PAPER-SIZED BOX IS IDEAL).
THESE ITEMS WILL BE DONATED 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 Jell-O
- 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

Reverse Advent Calendar to Support 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 are asking our members to place food items in a box throughout the month of December. (See the Reverse Advent Calendar 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.



2021 Poinsettia Donation Form

Share the joy of Christmas! This year we will be ordering poinsettias to place in the sanctuary for the Christmas Eve services. You can make a donation in memory or in honor of a loved one, to be displayed in the 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. There is also an option to donate to the Westminster Library.

Tear this Page out of the Messenger and Mail your check and 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: \$_____

Joanne Gabriel
Executive Assistant
Westminster Presbyterian Church
2110 Sheridan Blvd.
Lincoln, NE 68502
402-475-6702
www.westminsterlincoln.org





Westminster Presbyterian Church

2110 Sheridan Blvd

Lincoln, NE 68502

Holiday of Trees Returns to Westminster with Live Music from LMTA

The Heritage League is once again holding their 49th 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! Bring your family & friends and share the experience with them.



The Lincoln Music Teachers Association (LMTA) will join together with local musicians to volunteer live entertainment for the 49th annual Holiday of Trees.

LMTA studios volunteering live music this year include: Lindsay Bartlett (flute), Nancy Buxton (piano), Lynette Boyce (piano), Dr. Marina Fabrikant (piano), Antonio Forgione (classical guitar), Heather Pederson (strings), Deanna McClintick (piano), Wanda Mandigo (piano), Cindy Matz (piano), Alice Miller (piano), Nancy Schoen (piano), Jane Sonneland (piano), Jo Riecker-Karl (piano/guitar), Marcia Wiebers (piano), and Dr. Svetlana Yashirin (piano).

Local musician volunteers include Dorothy Applebee, Janet Domeier, Caroline Dow, Jerry Pawlak and Doris Winkler. A final music schedule will be posted on the announcement page at www.LMTA.info, the Heritage League Facebook page, and the Lincoln Music Teachers Association and Music Outreach Program-LMTA Facebook pages.