



THE MESSENGER

August 2023



SERVICE PROJECT WORSHIP SERVICE!

"KIDS AGAINST HUNGER" FOOD PACKING

With excitement, you are invited to join us for a unique worship service on Sunday, August 6th, from 9:30-11:00am in the Westminster Gym!



PEOPLE'S CITY MISSION | EST. 1907

Half of the meals we pack will stay in Lincoln for distribution by People City Mission, and half will go to the Omaha and Winnebago reservations and people in need in our state.

A MESSAGE TO THE CONGREGATION FROM PASTOR CHRIS

Westminster Family,

Church. That word brings up different images to mind, but one that stands out to me is YOU – our congregation – as I look out from the chancel and pulpit each Sunday! Every Sunday there are familiar faces and new faces. There are faces I know are filled with joy over a birth or engagement or promotion in the same pew as faces I know carry the weight of a recent loss or financial stress. The truth is this: we all carry the reality of our lives into worship with us, and that is OK.

When we gather, we worship as Christians with day-to-day ups-and-downs in the world, trying to find peace in turmoil or to give thanks to God for the good. In August our worship will follow the 3-year cycle of scriptures we often use, called the lectionary. In those scriptures I've identified a common theme: a challenge for us to consider what happens When Life Shows Up To Church. From those who hunger (our 8/6 Kids Against Hunger service project Sunday!), our own discomfort, and the hurting – what do we do when life's ups-and-downs are very real and very present to us at church?

Looking ahead, as Summer 2023 winds down, we begin to consider what our schedules will look like in the Fall. Starting in August, Westminster will be highlighting 1-2 "event" Sundays a month for the semester. You should receive a postcard in the mail soon highlighting these events for the Fall. For now, this month includes an exciting opportunity to serve others in our worship service on August 6th as we pack 10,000 meal kits for Kids Against Hunger in the gym. This will take place during our worship service, not afterward, and is a new way for us to consider worship as not just a service for us but a response to God's call to serve by us. I hope you'll join us! The following Sunday, as school gets back in gear, we'll Bless Backpacks and celebrate communion as we return to the sanctuary. Info on Covenant Conversations, Adult Education, and more follow in this month's Messenger!

With Gratitude,
Pastor Chris

We welcome you to Worship in the Sanctuary with us on Sundays at 9:30 am and/or worship virtually with us on our YouTube channel at <https://westminsterlincoln.org/youtube-videos>.

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

Hearts & Hands is a fun-loving group that meets every Wed. from 1:30 – 3 PM, in the church library. Our mission is to knit and crochet items for the People's City Mission—hats, scarves, baby items, toys, etc. We donate finished items in November before the holidays. All needle work folks are welcome to come visit and see what you're missing! Laughter is free. All yarn donations are welcome! Questions: Call Franci Scheele at (402) 310-4212.

Lunch Bunch

Lunch Bunch will meet Tuesday, August 1, 11:30 A.M., at Hi-Way Diner, 2105 Nebraska Parkway (Hwy 2). Please R.S.V.P. to Jim Kinkennon at 402-290-5888.

Faith and Cancer Support Group | Tuesday, August 15 | Library at 7 p.m.

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 Bruce Sheffield at 402-783-0394 or Janice Rohwedder at 402-730-5568.

Prairie Readers | Wednesday, August 16 | Lounge at 1 PM

Weston Crawford will facilitate the discussion of *Remarkably Bright Creatures* by Shelby VanPelt. NAMED A BEST BOOK OF SUMMER by: Chicago Tribune * The View * Southern Living * USA Today. For fans of *A Man Called Ove*, a charming, witty and compulsively readable exploration of friendship, reckoning, and hope that traces a widow's unlikely connection with a giant Pacific octopus. -Amazon

Ladies' Night Out

You are invited to join us this month at Billy's Restaurant 1301 H Street. Nader will prepare an assortment of hardy appetizers served family style. Cost is the pre-arranged price of \$15/person; plus cost of drink, tax and tip.

When: Tuesday, August 29th 5-7 PM

RSVP to Robyn Uebele at robynu2@hotmail.com. Text or call Robyn 937-935-6858.

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/Vine are due to Tracy and Joanne Gabriel at joanne@westminsterlincoln.org by 5 pm on Monday of each week.



Presbyterian Women's Fall Kick-off

Saturday, August 19 at 10:30 AM in the Parlor

Shampoo... St. Louis... Sacred Encounters

All women of Westminster are invited to come and discover the connections. PW enters a year of opportunities to do purposeful Bible study, meaningful mission, build lasting friendships in Circles, and find a caring and inclusive community here and beyond Westminster. Oh, and there will be scones! Contact Linda Burchard at (402) 477-5572, or email her at lindajburchard@gmail.com with any questions.

Adult Education in August

Sundays in August in Fellowship Hall, except Aug. 13th will be in the Garden Room.

Aug. 6: Inclusion at Westminster, Rev. Chris Peters

Aug. 13: Welcoming Task Force Conversation, Garden Room

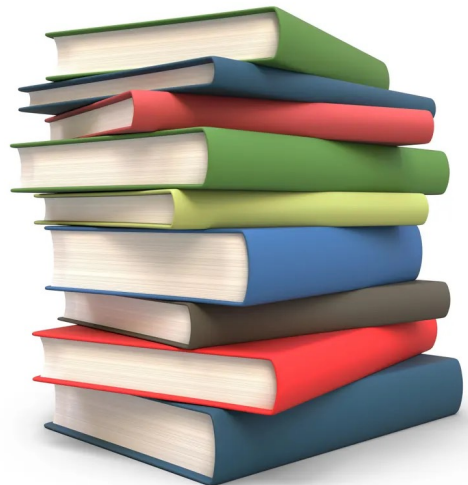
Aug. 20: Welcoming Task Force, Kathy Rohwedder

Aug. 27: Welcoming Committee, Rev. Brian Ellison, Guest Speaker

It's Time

For Our Annual Used Book Sale!!

It's official! This year's Book Sale will be held in Fellowship Hall August 13-20. Start checking your shelves for items to donate—books (of course!), puzzles, games, CDs and DVDS—and bring them to the church library **NO LATER THAN AUG 9**. This is the sole source of funds for library materials, and we always have lots to choose from, so donate and then buy!



Westminster Family,

We are Delighted to Serve as the Host Church for Covenant Conversations: Nebraska in August!

This will be a gathering of Presbyterians from across our state to engage questions of welcome and inclusion in a thoughtful and faithful manner. As we prepare to welcome our neighbors, I want to share why we are hosting from my vantage point.

When I began the call search that led us to ministry together in 2020, one of my core faith-values was that my congregation of call be welcoming and inclusive. From the Mission Statement that was written before my call here and we use to this day, which upholds our value as an “inclusive faith family,” to the ways visitors compliment our sense of welcome - it is clear to me that Westminster is a church that values including our neighbors from a variety of backgrounds and life situations while welcoming all who enter our doors and our family in good faith.

Early on, I saw that Westminster was listed as a Covenant Network of Presbyterians (covnetpres.org) church dating to the founding year of that network in 1997. Since August 2021, our Session has been engaging in dialogue about our understanding of welcome with Rev. Brian Ellison, the Director of the Covenant Network.

In our own exploration of welcome and hospitality at Westminster, our Session approved the Welcoming Task Force, an energized group of Westminster members who are helping us identify what it means to be faithfully inclusive. You have heard from members in worship, in notes in our publications, and in other spaces for the past year. Through conversation with Rev. Ellison and other Nebraskan Presbyterians, we were invited to consider hosting this event, which Session approved this past Spring.

In August, following worship, we will explore together as a Westminster family how we understand inclusivity and welcome during Adult Education. On Sunday, August 6th, right after Kids Against Hunger, I will lead a discussion on Presbyterian identity and understanding of why we seek to be a ‘big tent’ of welcome, or as we have said in the past at Westminster, “broadly inclusive.”

I hope you will attend Covenant Conversations on August 26th, whether you’re exploring your own understanding of inclusivity or feel you “have it down pat.” I hope you will attend with questions and openness to the conversations that will take place. Rev. Ellison will also be teaching Adult Ed and preaching at Westminster on Sunday, August 27th. I know we will welcome Brian with joy and enthusiasm for his presence and shared gifts in ministry.

If you have questions about this event or the ongoing conversations, please ask me! Questions are valued here and in our Presbyterian tradition.

With Gratitude,
Pastor Chris



William McConnell shares his story about his Earth Care efforts through both investing and farming. Watch the live interview this week in the eVine and on our church FB Group.

William, tell us about your family farm and what types of things you're doing at the farm to help care for the Earth.

My family has a 400 acre cow, calf and corn farm near Central City, NE. We have about 60 head of cattle that graze on about 250 Acres of native pasture and what we do for the environment- we have an original native pasture and it's never been tilled. It provides a habitat for a lot of insects and animals. My dad just recently saw a badger out there. We see a lot of deer and all that out there too.

What are your plans for the future to make the farm even more sustainable?

Right now I'm thinking about investing in More energy efficient equipment And using soy based Biodiesel.

That will help reduce diesel emissions and pollution because the soybeans make the biodiesel. As well as use cover crops to reduce the erosion on our soil because we have really sandy soil which can really blow away.

How did you get interested in investing in renewable energy?

I just had an interest in renewable energy and I found a couple renewable energy companies that interested me and I wanted to support them. I had a little extra money laying around so I might as well see if it grows.

That's Awesome! How do you earn the money that you invest?

I get a little bit of the profit from the farm as well as I mow lawns in the Summer. And recently, I just got a job at The Mill.



How do you decide which companies to invest in, you touched on that, but are there other parameters or ideas that you think about?

I start off by just Googling “renewable energy companies” or “the best renewable energy stocks” that gives me a baseline of what to invest in. Then I go into detail and look to see if their earnings are good, see if I believe in them. Even if their earnings aren’t good, should I believe in the concept? For example, hydrogen. I invest in that. The earnings aren’t great, but I have hope that it will keep growing.

In your everyday life, what ways do you care for the Earth?

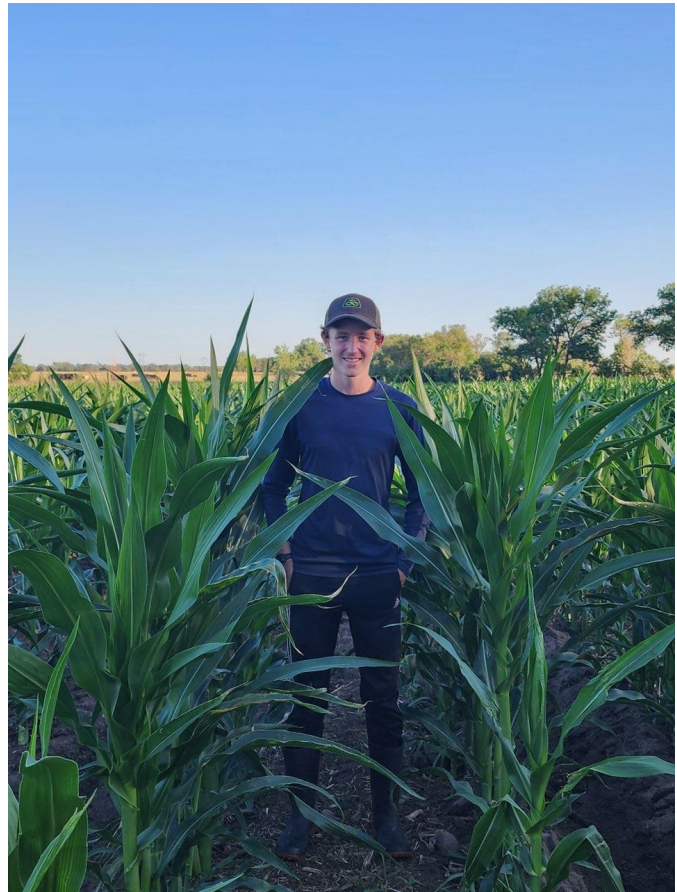
I try to use E15 gas in my car, which is 15% ethanol based with corn ethanol. That helps reduce the emissions from that and helps lower carbon emissions. As well, I have an electric lawn mower and it’s my third season on it and I love it. There is no fuss with gas and it is a lot better for the environment. We also use an organic fertilizer for our lawn, so we don’t pollute the soil with regular fertilizer and all that.

Why is Earth Care important to you?

I think it is important because we need to preserve the Earth for next generations and God gave us this Earth to care for and I think we just need to keep it healthy and have clean air and water and soil to live in.

Is there anything else you’d like to share knowing that this (interview) is geared toward Westminster people or anything on that note?

I think just even small steps that you can take towards helping the environment will help. Like just turn your thermostat up or down depending on the season, a degree or two will save a lot of energy. And if everyone did that, it would be good.



Thank you William, for sharing your story with the Westminster Congregation. You are setting an inspiring example for all of us!

**All Church Pool Party: Thursday, August 10**

Westminster has reserved Star City Shores on Thursday, August 10 from 6:30-8:00 PM to celebrate the end of the summer holiday. There are pools and play areas, interactive water features, and water slides. Bring your friends and come cool off with us!

Blessing of the Backpacks: Sunday, August 13

If you are a student or educator of any kind, we invite you to come join us on August 13 to receive your blessing for the coming year. Students of all ages are encouraged to bring their backpacks to receive blessings to begin the school year with the positive energy of prayers for their safety, health, happiness, and continued growth.

AND Sunday Sundae Bar

To celebrate the beginning of the new academic year, the Children and Youth and Church Life Committees will be serving ice cream from the UNL Dairy Store in the Garden Room after the service along with a whole array of carefully curated sundae toppings.

Blessing of the Backpacks and Other Back to School Traditions

“You’re off to great places! Today is your day!

Your mountain is waiting, So get on your way!” — Dr. Seuss

It is hard to believe that summer is winding down to the end. Very soon “first day of school” pictures will start cropping up on various social media platforms, a sure mark of a brand new school year. Aside from the annual Blessing of the Backpacks and Sunday Sundae Bar at Westminster, what are some of the ways your family marks the milestone that is the beginning of a new school year? Here are a few ways of marking the occasion.

1. **Count it down.** Make the first day of back-to-school something to look forward to by crafting a paper countdown chain. Each day, tear one link off the chain and ask the kiddos to name something they’re looking forward to about school.
2. **Make a family motto.** To help your little ones start the new school year in the right mindset, come up with a short family motto. It’ll help remind everyone what’s important in tough moments throughout the year.
3. **Interview your kids.** Discover goals, fears, and questions about all things school by interviewing your little scholars before the first bell rings. Write down the answers or record your kid’s answers. You may want to do a first day of school and last day of school comparison of answers.
4. **Morning Affirmations.** Grab an extra pad of sticky notes on your back-to-school-supply-shopping trip and use them to plaster their bathroom mirror or door with positive affirmations: “You’ve got this!” “You’re going to do great!” “I’m proud of you!” “You are going to ROCK ____ grade!” Love notes are always a great way to start your morning.
5. **Create a bucket list.** You do it for summer, why not make one for the school year? Whether they want to jump a reading level or two or try out for a new sport, when kids have goals, they succeed!
6. **Show and tell dinner.** Family dinners are always important, but make it a back-to-school tradition to allow the kids to tell you everything about their first day, from the friends they haven’t seen over the Summer to the classroom layout or what they had for lunch.



Calvin Crest Fun Day: Saturday, August 19

Calvin Crest is having a party and you are invited! Come join the all-day event and spend the day relaxing in the sun. Activities include sand volleyball, human foosball, music, games, food and more. Check out the details here <https://calvincrest.org/familyfunday/> and get away for the day.



Insteadium: Saturday & Sunday, August 19-20

Connect with other Middle and High School Students from area churches at this short and sweet overnight event we call INSTEADIUM. This is designed for Middle and High Schoolers and their youth leaders. The event officially starts at 5:00 PM on Saturday, August 19 and ends at 11:00 AM on Sunday, August 20, but you can spend more time at Calvin Crest if you arrive earlier in the day for the [5th Annual Family Fun Day](#).

Let Trish know if you are interested, trish@westminsterlincoln.org or call (402) 570-0163.

Details are here <https://calvincrest.org/insteadium/>.

LiNK Wednesday Nights: Begin Again on September 6



Wednesday activities will begin again on September 6 from 5:30-7:30 PM. Families are welcome to join us for dinner, which will be served from 5:30-6:00. Afterwards, kids from nursery age through high school are invited for activities, discussion, and fun.

Westminster Neighborhood Welcome, Sunday, September 10

Westminster Neighborhood Welcome will take place at 10:30 on Sunday, September 10th. Look for games, a bouncy house, food, and fun. In addition to all the fun stuff, various Life Groups will be showcasing upcoming activities and families can get their kids signed up for Faith Village. Children can also be registered for Faith Village in advance by completing the online form <https://forms.gle/7qwGiLpg3udB2qzq7>

CROP Walk:

Only 81 days until the 2023 CROP Walk!

What is the CROP Walk? It's a 1.5 mile walk that takes place on October 8.

How can you participate?

1. **Walk** - in solidarity with others, your physical activity shows you care (2-3 hours).
2. **Educate** - hunger is a local and global problem. Learn, then share with others (as little as 1 hour).
3. **Fundraise** - make a difference by asking for donations to provide food and water (as little as 1 hour).

Start by signing up here to join the Westminster team or to donate to a walker: <https://events.crophungerwalk.org/2023/event/lincolnnne>. All walkers who register early will receive a Team Westminster t-shirt.

CROP Hunger Walks were the first charity walk in our nation and remain a grassroots effort symbolizing the daily journey that many must make for their basic needs. Hunger is a problem everywhere, even here in Nebraska. 1 in 8 people in southeast Nebraska is food insecure, which equates to an estimated 57,960 people, including 18,740 children. Join our team and take action to change the world!

Presbyterians in the Park: Sunday, October 1

Service will be at the Antelope Band Shell with lunch after at the Auld Center. There will be more details coming.

Spooktacular: Wednesday, October 25

Spooktacular will take place on October 25. Bring your princesses, goblins, superheroes and more to trick-or-treat in the church parking lot.

Advent Workshop: Sunday, December 3

The Advent workshop will take place on Sunday, December 3 from 10:30-11:30 in Fellowship Hall.

Angel Tree Bake Sale & Auction

The Westminster Youth Group will be holding an auction during the Advent Workshop to raise money for Angel Tree presents. The Youth Group will be baking or decorating baked goods for a silent auction, but we would like to call upon all of our talented and creative bakers to donate something special to the cause. Cakes, pies, brownies, bars, breads, or anything you would like to make is welcome. To contribute an item to the auction, please complete this form <https://forms.gle/F3YnwA97dxXKmaDP6>.

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



Westminster Presbyterian Church
2110 Sheridan Blvd
Lincoln, NE 68502

You are Invited to Join Us for a Unique Worship Service on Sunday, August 6

Westminster will team up with Heartland Kids Against Hunger (heartlandkah.org) to pack 10,000 meal kits during our worship! All ages! Families are encouraged to participate.

Worship will take place in the Westminster Gym (with entry on the preschool hallway across from Faith Village). It will include a Call to Worship, Special Music piece, scripture, brief message and time for our project. Communion will move to the following Sunday, August 13th.

Nursery and a kids option will be available for our youngest disciples. This will be a "Casual Sunday," wear clothes that are comfortable for a service project. Closed-toe shoes are recommended, and all participants will be asked to wear a hair net for the packing time for food safety considerations. Look out for Pastor Chris in shorts that Sunday!



We will not livestream our full Sunday service, but Pastor Chris will pre-record a 30min service for our YouTube worshippers. Reach out to Pastor Chris (chris@westminsterlincoln.org) or Mission/Outreach Chair Glenna Haller with any questions.