



The December 2023 Issue

THE MESSENGER

One God, One-in-Christ, One Westminster – all in gratitude!

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>.



Christmas Eve Worship Image by Allen Wachter

Please Join us on Christmas Eve in Worship on Sunday, December 24th

9:30 AM: *Advent 4 Worship; Finding Hope—Hope is Near*

5:00 & 7:00 PM: *Christmas Eve Worship with Candle Lighting*



Advent is a Time Set Aside to Anticipate Christ's Coming

But, it is so easily overtaken with busyness. You're invited to set aside time this season to reflect on Christ's arrival to come at Christmas! Here are a few options we recommend:

Presbyterians for Earth Care (Based on the Daily Lectionary): Sign-up online for a daily email to be sent to your inbox. Web address: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe0u_oJqzcmEws6OGp331qegCaHEBcljNbMdXvVhAskhSZitA/viewform?pli=1

D365 geared to Youth, Young Adults and their Families: ("but, honestly, good for all ages." ~ Pastor Chris) An online (and app-based!) devotional written by Presbyterians and denominational partners. Follows the Sunday lectionary, with Advent devotionals beginning Sunday, December 3rd.
Web address: <https://d365.org/>

Westminster Friends,

Merriam-Webster defines hope (n) as a "desire accompanied by expectation of or belief in fulfillment." I would argue that definition is similar to what we experience in the Christian season of Advent. A desire (a Savior) accompanied by expectation of (waiting) or belief in fulfillment (our trust in God to make all things new). This Advent at Westminster our guiding theme will be, Finding Hope. As we worship this December, let us seek hope with the joyful knowledge that we will Find Hope all along the way.

Looking back, God's answer to humanity's longing for hope was with a new beginning in the Word-Made-Flesh, Jesus Christ. Our Advent journey together will partly follow the prophecies of Isaiah that spoke to people who were seeking hope in the form of a Savior. This Advent and through Christmas Eve, you are invited to Find Hope with us at Westminster. I look forward to worshipping with you during this beautiful season in the life of our faith and church!

With Gratitude,
Pastor Chris

**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. 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 Francy Scheele at (402) 310-4212.

Lunch Bunch will meet at Olive Garden, Gateway Mall**Tuesday, December 5, 11:30 A.M.**

As always, no agenda, no program, just fun. Please R.S.V.P. to Jim at jimkinkennon@gmail.com.

Faith and Cancer Support Group | Tuesday, December 19 | 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. This Life Group meets every third Tuesday of the month from 7-8 PM in the church library. All are welcome. Contact Bruce Sheffield at 402-783-0394 or Janice Rohwedder at 402-730-5568.

Prairie Readers | Wednesday, December 20 | Lounge at 1 p.m.

Prairie Readers will meet December 20 at 1 PM in the lounge. We will share delicious holiday treats and enjoy a film selected by Weston Crawford. We wish our fellow readers the blessings of the Christmas season.

Ladies' Night Out | Wednesday, December 20th from 5:00-7:00 p.m.

You are invited to join us this month at Billy's Restaurant! Their address is 1301 H. Street. Join us and bring a friend. Cost: \$15/per person. This is our prearranged pricing for family-style heavy appetizers. This price does not include tip, tax and drink cost. RSVP to Robyn Uebele at robynu2@hotmail.com, by Sunday, December 17.

All information for The Messenger is due to tracy@westminsterlincoln.org by the 18th of each month. All announcements for The eVine/Vine are due to Tracy and joanne@westminsterlincoln.org by 5 pm on Monday of each week.

Angel Tree Project

Once again Westminster is partnering with the Salvation Army Angel Tree Project.

Christmas and holiday gifts from the Angel Tree are given to children from low-income families. Gifts, toys, clothing, and much more are provided for children 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 reception desk. Pick a tag from the tree and 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. 13. Most people, especially children, look forward to receiving clothing and gifts over the holidays. Will you be someone's Angel?

Thank you. Mission & Outreach



A Shepherd's Christmas!

Presented by: Westminster Preschool



Tuesday, December 5th 6:30pm

**children should arrive at 6:15pm*

Westminster Church Sanctuary

**please enter through main church doors*

**We've Been Working
Really Hard Preparing
for Our Christmas
Program!**

We would love you to join us
on December 5th for our
presentation of "A Shepherd's
Christmas".

~Westminster Preschool
Students

Advent Workshop

December 10, 2023 from 10:45 AM – 12:00 PM

Advent has arrived! As we move into the season of expectation and preparation, we invite you to join us at the Advent Workshop on December 10. We will gather immediately after church to renew friendships, enjoy food together, and make lasting memories. At the craft tables, we will be making blooming wire sculptures, God with us weavings, and watercolor stars of Bethlehem.



After you make a craft, you can enjoy the hot chocolate and coffee bar and decorate cookies, then taste the various chili offerings and select the winner of the coveted Silver Ladle. Be sure to check out the Youth Group Mission Baked Goods Auction for a selection of delicious items from the Youth Group and your favorite Westminster bakers to stock up on Christmas treats. We look forward to seeing you there!

All Church Caroling

December 20, 5:30 PM-6:30 PM

Join us for caroling through the neighborhood! We will leave church at 5:30 p.m. and finish up with hot cocoa and a meal in Cole Hall.

Help us to share with our neighbors the HOPE, LOVE, JOY and PEACE of Advent.



Poinsettias

We will be ordering poinsettias to place in the sanctuary for the Christmas Eve services again this year. You can donate in memory or in honor of a loved one, to be included in the bulletin for Christmas Eve. Complete the order form on page 11 and return it to the office by December 11th. The donation level is \$15.

Hearts and Hands

Wednesdays, 1:30-3pm.

We would love to have others join our Knitting/Crocheting Family!!

Our Hearts and Hands group delivered our knitted gifts to the Lincoln People's City Mission during November!

Three large bags filled with 174 items~ hats, scarves, baby blankets, shawls, bibs, and other misc.

Our group is SMALL, but all have BIG caring hearts! We are so blessed, creating items while having fun each Wednesday afternoon, putting love & prayers in every stitch, knowing they are going to a new home, new owner.



A Working Elevator! What a Blessing

By Steve Hughes and Pat Leach, Trustees of the Westminster Foundation

The Westminster Foundation Board of Trustees recently reviewed the completion of the elevator project and Foundation support for this important project.

Steve Hughes researched this complicated story, reporting, "When the elevator was originally installed they apparently figured that since the control room was all interior walls there was no need for heating and cooling. In order to keep it from overheating, though, there was a vent installed through the roof with a standpipe that stood a few inches above the roof surface. A series of events led to the problem. There were a lot of pine needles and leaves that had fallen and gathered on the roof. Before that could be cleared, there was a heavy rain that washed the debris to the roof drain and clogged it. The rain continued to fall and the rain water built up on the roof high enough that it overflowed the vent and the water fell into the control room and onto the electronic control panel. This shorted out and damaged the electronic controls for the elevator. The parts needed to repair the control panel were obsolete and unavailable due to the age of the system. Therefore, the control panel had to be replaced with new electronics. The City codes department then considered this an upgrade rather than just a repair so it needed to be brought up to current code regulations. This included adding heating and cooling, upgrades to the electrical system, sprinkler systems, alarms, etc. which, of course, added to the cost of the project. Our insurance covered what they considered the cost to "repair" the elevator, but did not cover costs to upgrade to current code."

All in all, the repair bill has totaled just over \$140,000. Insurance paid \$85,000. The Westminster Foundation has provided just over \$55,600 so far, with just over \$28,000 from the Henderson Fund, and \$34,000 from Facilities Endowment donations.

The elevator is vital to many members of our church family and visitors. The Foundation thanks all donors whose generosity contributed to the elevator's restoration, and also salutes the conscientious work of the Building and Grounds Committee for carefully shepherding the process. As we join in worship during Advent and Christmas, we celebrate the access the elevator provides to so many people. It's an especially important time for fellowship. How blessed we all are to see the elevator ensuring that our whole church family experiences the season together.



Green@Heart Travel Challenge

Will you be among the 55 million people flying for the Christmas holidays? Or for a vacation next year? Here's to a wonderful trip! But give this a thought, too. One passenger's round trip flight from Nebraska to Denver or Chicago will generate about 20 metric tons of carbon dioxide. East or west coast, 50-60 metric tons. And multiply that by the number of travelers.

You might want to give our warming planet a break by purchasing carbon offsets. A fair price of about \$10 per 50 metric tons will counteract that CO₂, for instance by planting trees. It's easy to calculate the carbon footprint of your trip at <https://www.carbonfootprint.com/calculator.aspx>. Then make your donation. There are many carbon credit programs online, and some are guilty of greenwashing. But a couple we know are good are One Tree Planted <https://onetreeplanted.org/products/plant-trees> and the Presbyterian Tree Fund <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/eco-journey/presbyterian-carbon-tree-fund/>.

If you choose to do this, would you let the church know (anonymously)? It would be fun to tabulate the difference we make. Just write down two numbers—your trip's metric ton total and the amount you decided to donate—and put your slip in the box on the front desk. We'll announce the total in January.

Church Directory Photos

If you would still like a Church Directory Photo taken, contact Jim Kinkennon at 402-290-5888 or jimkinkennon@gmail.com. We'd like to have as many members included in the directory as possible.



Mission/Outreach is pleased to bring Equal Exchange Coffee and Equal Exchange Organic Chocolate to Westminster friends.

Available the first Sunday of the month. HINT – Great gift ideas for the holiday season.

Our congregation is proud to offer a brew that is delicious and chocolate that is organic. These products reflect our values of social justice. By choosing this fairly traded coffee and chocolate, you are supporting a whole separate ethical supply chain—not huge corporations. Enjoy it! Buy some to bring home, and share it with friends.

When we give the opportunity to purchase Equal Exchange products during Fellowship Hour after services or for the holidays, we're making a strong statement about our values as a community. We're proclaiming that our congregation believes that it's vital to keep small farmers on the land providing food for their families and having some economic control over their lives; that it's important to work with indigenous producers and women; that sustainable agricultural methods are a vital way to address climate change.

Lights Out!

Seems every family has one (usually dad)—the person who reminds everyone else to “Turn out the lights!” when leaving a room. But our church building doesn’t have that person. When lights are left burning in empty rooms at Westminster they are quite literally “burning” the fossil fuels that contribute to global warming. They are also adding to the “Utilities” line item in our budget instead of items like “Children’s Ministry” or “Associate Pastor.”

So Westminster is starting a “Lights Out” campaign in 2024. Watch for small reminders at each light switch with this request, “Last person out, please turn off the lights.” Last person in a classroom or meeting room, turn off the lights. Last person cleaning up the kitchen, turn off the lights. Last person hanging up a choir robe, turn off the lights. Offices, Fellowship Hall, the Garden Room—turn off the lights. Just channel your inner dad. It may take a little while to learn where the light switches are, but we can do this!



Holiday Recycling

Once again Green@Heart will be helping you responsibly dispose of foam packaging from holiday purchases. Beginning December 3 there will be a receptacle by the east door to collect foam. (Food containers and packing peanuts not accepted.) Failed light strings will also be collected.

So you know, we take the foam to its source in Omaha, Plastilite. They make the original foam packaging and also reuse the old to make new. So it’s possible that we’ve sent foam back and forth to them five times.



Call for Baked Goods

The season of expectation and giving is coming soon, bringing with it opportunities to spread good cheer with unexpected gifts. The Youth Group will be sponsoring a baked goods auction at the Advent Workshop (Sunday, December 10) again this year to support various mission initiatives throughout the year, including the annual Angel Tree gifts. We are calling for 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.

Please include a list of the ingredients used in your recipes in order to help those with food allergies select items that are safe for them.

Contact Trish at trish@westminsterlincoln.org or complete this form <https://forms.gle/GU9y4Vinjjoimb3v9>. Please indicate ingredients if possible. Master creations can be delivered between 10-2 on the Friday before the workshop, or on Sunday.



Wednesday Night LiNK

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

Sunday Night Youth Group

The Youth Group meets on Sunday from 6:00 PM-7:30 PM to hang out and talk, play games, or do homework.

December Sermon Series

Finding Hope

December 3

Hope in Our Past

Isaiah 64:1-9

December 10

Hope in Current Times

Isaiah 40:1-11

December 17

A Service of Lessons and Carols

December 24

Hope is Near

"No prep" Christmas Pageant!

Christmas Eve

5:00 & 7:00 p.m.

Hope is Here

Luke 2:1-20

Westminster Presbyterian Church (USA)

2110 Sheridan Blvd, Lincoln, NE

westminsterlincoln.org

youtube.com/westminsterlincoln

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

ORDER NOW!



2023 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 included 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. 11** to be included in the order of worship. There is also an option to donate to the Westminster Library.

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: \$ _____





Westminster Presbyterian Church
2110 Sheridan Blvd
Lincoln, NE 68502

Advent/Christmas Schedule

Dec. 3, 9:30 AM 10:45 AM Fellowship Hall	Advent 1 Worship; Finding Hope—Hope in Our Past “Name that Christmas Carol” – John Ross, Adult Education
Dec. 10, 9:30 AM 10:45 AM	Advent 2 Worship; Finding Hope—Hope in Our Present Advent Workshop: Chili Cook-off, Advent activities for all ages!
Dec. 17, 9:30 AM 10:45 AM Lounge 4 PM Auld Pavilion at Antelope Park	Advent 3 Lessons & Carols Worship Service Sharing of Christmas Traditions, Adult Education Multi-denominational Service for the Weary
Dec. 24, 9:30 AM 5 & 7 PM	Advent 4 Worship; Finding Hope—Hope is Near Christmas Eve Worship with Candle Lighting Finding Hope—Hope is Here
Dec. 25 Dec. 31, 9:30 AM Jan. 1	Christmas Day—Office Closed New Year’s Eve Worship Service New Year’s Day—Office Closed

