



# THE MESSENGER

*One God, One-in-Christ, One Westminster  
~ all in gratitude!*



## The 2023 Annual Report Issue

## 2024: A Year of Insight for this Pastor

Westminster Friends,

Each February, our Messenger shares annual reports – summaries from our Ministry/Committee Chairs about what's taken place in the past year. As we've crossed the threshold into 2024, many of us have been discussing "Star Words" that were shared in worship during our Epiphany celebration on Sunday, 1/7. My word was "insight," which begs the question – should I see this as an inspiration to further share my insight on where we can head as a church *or* is it a call to gain insight? There's a bit of a joke in there, but the answer to me is, 'both.'

2024 is a year to build on the momentum of 2023: to be more creative and diverse in worship, to be more invitational to our neighbors, and to be more active and visible in our Lincoln community! That requires us to have insight on where to go but also to gain insight by *asking* questions, *listening* to each other at WPC and to our neighbors in Lincoln, and by *being open* to the Spirit's leading in the coming year.

As we look back with joy on great 2023 moments such as **packing 10,000 meals during our Kids Against Hunger worship service, connecting roughly 670 people to the story of the birth of Jesus on Christmas Eve between in-person and online worshipers, hosting more baptisms and new members since before COVID**, and – if you're like me – simply feeling a sense of hope for where we are headed. So as I wrestle with the meaning of the word 'insight' for my own year ahead, I hope you will bring a spirit of listening of the insights of others as well as sharing insights that might help us move forward in purpose and ministry in 2024!

With Gratitude,  
Pastor Chris

We got word today from PCUSA of a Lenten Calendar, you can view it on-line at <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/resource/tread-lightly-for-lent/>

**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. 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 | Famous Dave's Bar-B-Que, 2750 Pine Lake Road | Tuesday, February 6, 11:30 A.M.**

As always, no agenda, no program, just fun. All are welcome. Please RSVP to Jim Kinkennon at 402-290-5888 or jimkinkennon@gmail.com so we have an accurate count.

**History Buffs: "The History of Cardiac Surgery and Development of the Heart/Lung Machine" Saturday, February 10 | Lounge at 9:00 a.m.**

Weather permitting, there will be a History Buffs program on Saturday, February 10 at 9:00 am in the Lounge. Presented by Dr. Ryan Shelstad. Watch our FB Page for updates.

**Prairie Readers | Wednesday, February 21 | Lounge at 1 p.m.**

Prairie Readers will meet February 21 at 1 PM in the Lounge. Diana Wild will lead the discussion of Foster by Claire Keegan. This book is one of The Times( UK) Top 50 novels published in the 21st Century. This is a beautifully written story that tugs at your heart. It is a small size (5x7) and has only 92 pages! All are welcome!

**Faith and Cancer Support Group | Tuesday, February 20 | Library at 7 p.m.**

Finding Comfort and Peace after the diagnosis of Cancer is often very difficult to say the least. However, sharing that uneasy feeling with others who have been on that journey, can be a surprising and helpful new dimension. Here at Westminster Presbyterian Church our support group is based on three specific features: sharing laughter, sharing burdens, and sharing blessings. We meet in the library at 7 PM on the third Tuesday of each month. All are welcome. Contact Bruce Sheffield at (402) 783-0394.

**Ladies' Night Out | Thursday, February 29th, LEAP YEAR, from 5:00-7:00 p.m.**

You are invited to join us this month at BILLY'S! Their address is 301 H Street. This year our prearranged price for family-style heavy appetizers will be \$17.00/per person, cost of drink and tip additional. Please RSVP by Saturday, February 26<sup>th</sup> to [robynu2@hotmail.com](mailto:robynu2@hotmail.com).



## BUILDING AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE 2023 ANNUAL REPORT



The committee acted on many maintenance and operation issues of the building and grounds that included ongoing projects, new improvements and several unexpected repairs. The completion of the work for sanctuary elevator is one of the most relevant and necessary repair items. The list of significant accomplishments below would not be possible without the continued financial support of the congregation and the uncounted hours by volunteers outside of the committee who responded to requests for help. Also, the Westminster Foundation provided much of the funding for large projects listed below. Again, special recognition of gratitude go out to Jim White for diligent coordination of ongoing stained glass window repair, and Joan and Bill Roberts for their unwavering dedication to lawn care.

### Projects from 2023:

- ☑ Completion of work on sanctuary elevator
- ☑ Quiet room upgrade
- ☑ Installation of safety/security windows to interior doors
- ☑ Landscape trimming, planting, clean-up
- ☑ Continued repair of stained glass windows (coordinated by Jim White)
- ☑ Repair roof leaks
- ☑ Continued conversion of lights to LED
- ☑ Repair lift elevator in Cole Hall
- ☑ Restroom upgrades and establishment of Non-gender restrooms
- ☑ Removal of bats and bat-proof east elevator tower
- ☑ Address water drainage and basement leaking issues on west sanctuary walls
- ☑ Improve church security: additional cameras, renovate burglar alarms, remote door locks
- ☑ Repair parking lot pavement and walks
- ☑ Assist in acquiring new property insurance provider

#### Committee Members Include:

Rob Baltensperger,  
Gary Haller,  
Steve Hughes,  
Steve Larson,  
Bob Leavitt,  
Tom Pappas,  
Ron Souliere, and  
moderator Tom Welstead.



## **Administration and Planning Committee 2023 ANNUAL REPORT**

**Committee members:** Moderator Marybell Avery, Joyce Douglas, Margaret Sprude, Allen Wachter, Megan Woita, Staff representative Pastor Chris Peters.

This year the Administration and Planning Committee welcomed a new member, Megan Woita, to the committee. Megan's service on the Board of Deacons provided valuable insight.

### **2023-2024 Committee Goals**

1. Support committees in setting and achieving their annual goals.
2. Review and revise policies and procedures as needed.
3. Maintain Bylaws and ensure adherence.
4. Advise and assist Pastor Chris as requested in planning and implementing Session training.

### **In 2023 We Conducted Business Related to the Following Topics:**

- 2023 Session Training retreat
- WPC security policy
- Kitchen programming
- Bylaws revisions
- Support for each committee's goals and liaison with committees for action on the goals
- Presbyterians in the Park
- Support for Welcoming Task Force initiatives
- Examination of Grants Task Force
- General Policies and Procedures for Committees
- Policy related to memorial gifts
- Growing Young concepts adopted by committees
- Task Force on Committee Structure
- Child Protection Policy
- Nominations procedure
- Building Usage Policy

## Worship and Music Year End Report 2023-24

Committee Members: Jim and Rita Kinkennon, Mike and Mary Tomlinson, Michael and Freda Gregg, David Anderson, April Douglas, Jim Hlava, Diana Wild – Moderator Also attending meetings are Pastor Chris Peters and Mary Dougherty, Music Director.

The ministry of the Worship and Music (W and M) committee follows the Church Year. It starts with the First Sunday in Advent and ends with Christ the King Sunday.

Ongoing duties include communion prep, leading communion servers, recruiting and managing the usher list, flower sign-up, church safety in cooperation with Building and Grounds, support to music staff as needed.

Highlights of the year include the Hanging of the Greens with help from our youth, Epiphany and then taking down and storing all the greens, again with help from our youth. During Holy Week we support the various worship services as needed. We build and erect the cross filled with Easter lilies. We support worship at Presbyterians in the Park; on World communion Sunday we hang flags from other countries and use special cloths for the communion table. On Christ the King Sunday we are involved with the last communion Sunday of the church years.

Throughout the year we work to clean and clear out storage areas used by W and M.

One highlight of the year was the decision to clean the old choir room and rename it the Music Library. A music librarian was hired, and she has been working diligently to organize and extend the database. When finished we hope to share our extensive music library with other churches. Working with Building and Grounds, the room has been cleared of un-used materials.

Our music director Mary Dougherty has brought her many skills to the use of the existing music library, presenting wonderful music from the choir and other special groups. We are so glad to have her with us.

Finally, I'd like to tell you that all this work is performed by a loyal and dedicated team of volunteers. Each person brings special skills to the committee, and all are faithful in the carrying out of the work that is needed. It's been my honor to serve as Moderator these past years and I have complete faith that the team will continue working under the next Moderator appointed.



## Mission and Outreach Annual Report 2023

A heartfelt thank you to the Mission and Outreach committee: Sebit Deng, Gary Haller, Steve Hughes, Carolyn Harp, Marilyn Smith, Stephan Behing. And staff liaison - Rev. Jimmy Shelbourn.

We promoted four special offerings: Pentecost, One Great Hour of Sharing, Peace & Global Witness, and the Christmas Joy Offering. Donations were sent to Camp Calvin Crest, Lakes and Prairies Synod to support Synod School, Presbyterian Church (PCA) Missions Co-workers.

Westminster continued to support the Food Pantry. Marilyn Smith and Nora Hinrichs worked to keep the inventory at proper levels and organize the many volunteers. Marilyn has been our liaison as we partner with South View Christian Church.

Carolyn Harp continued to organize volunteers for The Gathering Place each month. Westminster also gave a monetary donation.

Carolyn Harp also coordinated the sale of Equal Exchange coffee and chocolate at Westminster to support farmers in South America.

Westminster helped with the Habitat for Humanity kick off breakfast in 2023. We provided meals on a regular basis for the volunteer builders and the Westminster children painted flower pots for Habitat to use as table center pieces and then be given to new home owners as a house warming gift. Westminster also gave a monetary donation.

Gary Haller and Susie Hughes organized volunteers as well as cooked and served for Matt Talbot Kitchen and outreach each month.

Sebit Deng represented Westminster at the Sudan/South Sudan Mission Conference in New Wilmington, PA.

Green@Heart was active in 2023 and will submit their report separate from this one. On behalf of this group, Glenna took a request to Session for Westminster to become a member of Presbyterians for Earth Care. The request was accepted.

Gary and Glenna Haller headed the Angel Tree Project with 150 tags available for folks to fill. The gifts were then delivered to the Salvation Army.

Glenna Haller lead the successful charge for Westminster to become a Matthew 25 congregation.



## Adult Education Committee 2023 Report

Members: Sarah Gergen, Tom Pappas, Kathy Phillip, Ernie Hines and the Rev. Jimmy Shelbourn.

The Adult Education Committee has shaped its Sunday morning programs to supplement the vision of Westminster Presbyterian Church. Our emphasis has been on biblically oriented programs to deepen our congregation's understanding of our faith, history, and doctrines. We have also developed programs that share our Christian hopes and responsibilities and address serious issues facing our community and world.

January began with our annual Community Conversations, "When Public Decisions Affect Private Lives." Speakers included:

- Rev. Dr. Carl Eskridge, a legal mediator, past City Council member and employee of the Nebraska Office of Public Counsel.
- Steve Smith, Director of Communications at Civic Nebraska.
- J.J. Wilkins, Principal at Prescott School, a partner in mission outreach with Westminster.
- Bennie Shobe, member of the Lincoln City Council.

"Why Do I Serve? Let Me Tell You My Story" was the theme for March. Kathleen Keefer of Clarinda, IA, national Co-Moderator of Presbyterian Women in the PC(USA), joined Adult Ed after serving as guest speaker on Gifts of Women Sunday. She discussed her Synod duties as chair of the Justice and Peace Committee. The following Sundays featured Kathy Rohwedder, Allen Wachter, Fred and Susan Zander and Tom Pappas.

"Creation Celebration" highlighted April and May, beginning April 16 as we celebrated our role as an Earth Care Congregation committed to "be stewards of the earth" in our worship, education, facilities, and outreach. Presenters included:

- David Lux, retired Saint Paul Senior Pastor, climate enthusiast on the necessity of eco-justice.
- A Panel of Presbyterian Pundits (Steve Larson, Chris Peters, Tom Pappas, and Laurel Van Ham) on what Westminster has done, is doing, and would like to do next to honor our Earth Care commitments.
- Lucyna de Barbaro, Conservation Consultant, shared how to reduce energy bills with new Tax credits.
- Justin Evertson, Assistant Director and Green Infrastructure Coordinator of the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum on introducing beneficial plant and wildlife diversity.
- Hostamania Sunday.

Pastor Jimmy Shelbourn explored our Book of Confessions in June to review how the Church has grappled with doctrinal and ethical issues over the centuries. His presentations included:

- The Ecumenical Creeds – Nicene and Apostles' Creeds
- The Reformation Confessions and Catechism
- Confessions During Conflict – Westminster and Barmen
- Recent Confessions – C. '67, Brief Statement of Faith, & Belhar



## Adult Education Committee 2023 Report Continued...

July's Adult Ed focus was on the psalms with a four-session presentation by Ernie Hines:

- Overview, the Shaping of the Psalter
- Books I and II, King David
- Books III and IV, Solomon and Exile
- Book V, God Reigns

Inclusion at Westminster was the August emphasis with presentations by Pastor Chris Peters; Rev. Brian Ellison, executive director of Covenant Network, discussing inclusion of LGBTQIA+ individuals in church life and leadership; and a Q&A featuring our own Welcoming Task Force.

September's focus was intergenerational, including a "Won't You Be My Neighbor" program.

October was Reformation Month! Pastor Jimmy looked at "other" faith reformations than those of Luther and Calvin, namely:

- Reforms of King Josiah in Judah, 7th century BCE
- Reforms under Ezra and Nehemiah, Jerusalem 5th century BCE
- Wesleyan Reforms in England 1700s

These sessions paused on Oct. 22 to hear a presentation by Kristi Rice, a Presbyterian mission co-worker to South Sudan.

- The Great Awakening in the British American colonies.

Although the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays abbreviated programing in November and December, this enabled a series of personal testimonies and recollections from congregation members. Claire Titus and Joyce Douglas shared their personal perspectives on Thankfulness, John Ross engaged the congregation with a quiz on Christmas Carols, and Ernie facilitated a Sharing of Christmas Traditions.

Planning for 2024 began as the committee assembled a group of presentations for the January Community Conversations on housing issues in Lincoln. Suggestions for future programs are always welcome.

## CHURCH LIFE COMMITTEE MINISTRY ANNUAL REPORT 2023

**Moderator:** Kathy Rohwedder.

**Members of Church Life:**

Janice Rohwedder, Linda Burchard, Cathy Hershberger, Glenna Haller,  
Dorrie Gage, Marilyn Hood & Stanley Rediger

**Staff Member:** Pastor Jimmy Shelbourn.

**A & P Liaison:** Joyce Douglas

**Church Life Oversees:**

Cook-N-Carry, Life Groups, Visitors, New Members, Bereavement, Greeters, Prayer Chain Ministry.

### It Has Been a Busy 2023 Year for Each of Our Members.

Kathy Rohwedder and her team had a total of 3 bereavements in 2023. Cookies, coffee, tea, water was served at the bereavements. There were a 15 volunteers who helped serve at the bereavements.

Dorrie and the Cook-N-Carry team had a total of 16 meals delivered.

Linda Burchard was in contact with new visitors by email, phone or a personal letter. Church Life is in charge of putting together the visitor bags for our first-time visitors. We had a total of 13 new members join Westminster in 2023.

Janice Rohwedder received 99 prayer requests and praises in the prayer chain. Westminster has 119 prayer warriors. This includes our Deacons, and our Elders as well as the congregation.

Janice Rohwedder worked with 12 different greeters and 2 backup greeters for Sunday mornings and special services in 2023.

The Church Life Committee oversaw the Life Groups in 2023. History Buffs, Ladies Night Out, Lunch Bunch, Hearts & Hands, and World on a Plate, are the Life Groups going on at this time. World on a Plate visited India and collected a total of \$1003 for the Presbyterian Disaster Fund.

Church Life Committee joined Children & Youth Committee in creating Sunday Social Hour as an inter-generational activity. They served the congregation Sunday Sundaes, Pentecost Cookies, Palm Sunday Cinnamon Rolls, Dessert Pizza, Carmel Apples. We wish to thank the Toppings Committee, Turner and Josh, for their work in choosing toppings and serving.

Presbyterians in the Park lunch was catered by the Church Life Committee. There was fried chicken from Hy-Vee, salads and desserts provided by our congregation. Church Life also organized the setting up and the taking down of tables and chairs for the lunch.

Glenna Haller organized the Christmas cards that were sent to our members who are 80 or older, as well as those who are shut in, showing our appreciation for them. There were about 100 Christmas cards sent out.

## Presbyterian Women at Westminster - 2023 Annual Report

**G-Force** is a measure of acceleration we feel because of the pull of gravity. It's what keeps our feet firmly planted on the ground. "G-Forces" exemplify Presbyterian Women - always moving forward yet firmly engaged in the church over time. The **G-Forces** for 2023 were **Grace-filled Gatherings, Generosity, and Gratitude.**

### GRACE-FILLED GATHERINGS

- 3 Circles meeting monthly for the Horizon Bible Study and fellowship.
- **Celebrating the Gifts of Women** service in March with the national Vice-Moderator Kathleen Keefer as the speaker.
- Homestead Presbytery Spring Gathering at Camp Calvin Crest and the Fall Gathering at Southern Heights Presbyterian Church in Lincoln.
- Celebrating the PW **Birthday Offering** in May with a traditional birthday party with games, candles, cake to honor the projects that were funded in the USA and globally.
- The **Fall Kick-Off** event in August with the Rev. Ellen Davis presenting an overview of the yearly Bible study "Sacred Encounters" in Luke-Acts, recognition of PW's 35th Anniversary, and the introduction of our local mission project, Lincoln Hygiene Network.
- The Advent workshop **Chili Cook-Off** with 'Our Better Together Chili' theme.

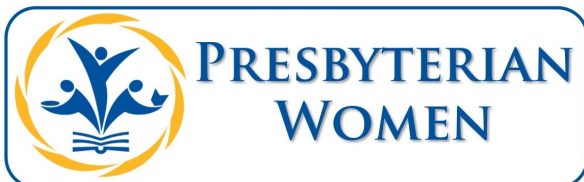
### GENEROSITY

Presbyterian Women give time, energy, and monetary support.

- Annual **Faith Pledge** to support the work of Presbyterian Women at all levels.
- **Offering of the Least Coin** - a world-wide effort in Christian churches.
- **Birthday Offering** in May for national and international vetted projects.
- **Thanks Offering** in November for projects in health ministries and mission endeavors.
- **Honorary Life Memberships** to honor local women who serve the ideals of PW.
- Our partnership with the **Lincoln Hygiene Network** that involved all of Westminster in collecting almost 2,000 personal care items for distribution to over 20 Lincoln area non-profit groups in September and October.

### GRATITUDE for

- **Honor Circle 1** - recognition for the gifts of service and devotion to PW by living members no longer able to be active. (Eliza Sams, Dorothy Glen, Pam Martin, Ginny Rohrbaugh).
- **Marilyn Smith and Nora Hinrichs** - recipients of Presbyterian Women's Honorary Life Memberships for their leadership and coordination of the Westminster Food Pantry. They were honored during a 'Moment of Gratitude' in the April 30 worship service.
- **Rev. Ellen Davis** for enlarging on the Horizon Bible Study materials with the monthly leaders and for sending communications for Presbyterian Women at Westminster.
- **Westminster Clergy and Staff** who undergird what Presbyterian Women do.
- The leadership of the **Presbyterian Women Coordinating Team** - Ellen Davis, Pat Hackley, Susie Hughes, Glenna Haller, Linda Miller, Jane Hines, Becky Bockrath.



*Faithfully submitted by Linda Burchard (Moderator)*

## Westminster Children and Families Committee 2023 Annual Report

**Committee Members:** Tim Gergen, moderator, Sarah Baltensperger, co-moderator, Stacy Graham, Laurie Lofquist, Brooke Larson, Stephanie Laux. **Staff members:** Trish Souliere, Bailey Jex.

2023 was a great year, and we are appreciative of our staff and volunteers, who make programming and these events possible! A special thank you to Fred & Susan Zander for the amazing meals they prepare for our youth on Wednesday nights, and to Ron Souliere who donates his time to our youth on Wednesdays and Sundays. We also collaborated with Good Shepherd Presbyterian church to combine efforts for youth events and VBS this year.

### Let's take a look at our year in review...

#### January

Pancake & Pajama Party for Faith Village  
Youth Group Lock-in  
Games with the Good Shepherd Youth Group

#### February

Souper Bowl Sunday  
Holiday Party  
Faith Village Escape Room  
Fruit Pizza after the service  
Urban Air with Good Shepherd Youth Group

#### March

Youth Group Bowling  
Youth Group Chopped  
Lent Outreach Bags delivered to families at Westminster

#### April

Cinnamon Roll Bar after the service  
Eggstravaganza  
Youth Group Mini Golf  
Youth Group Movie Night

#### May

Marathon Welcome  
Senior Recognition  
LiNK End of Year Worship Service/Picnic by the Youth Group  
Pentecost Cookies after the service

#### June

VBS: Make Waves with Good Shepherd (Held at Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church)  
Pollinator Service Project w/ Green at Heart  
Family Movie Night

#### July

Kiddie Pool Kickball with Good Shepherd Youth Group

#### August

All Church Star City Shores Pool Party  
Blessing of the Backpacks  
Sunday Sundae Bar after the service

#### September

Kick-off Sunday: It's a Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood  
Mr. Rogers Intergenerational Sunday School  
Youth Group Bowling

#### October

Youth Group CROP Walk  
Youth Group Roca Scary Farm  
Spooktacular  
Caramel Apple Bar after the service

#### November

Advent Outreach Bags delivered to children at Westminster

#### December

Youth Group Hanging of the Greens w/Music and Worship  
Advent Workshop  
Youth Group Angel Tree  
Christmas Party

See back cover page for this year's upcoming events!



## Green@Heart 2023 Annual Report

**Green@Heart is a sub-committee of Mission and Outreach. We meet on the third Monday of each month, and visitors or new members are always welcome.**

In 2023 Westminster completed our tenth year as a PCUSA-certified Earth Care Congregation. That couldn't happen without a wonderful staff and so many members of the Westminster Family who are committed to following God's call to tend creation. We are humbled to be your partners.

We began the year with what has become an annual ritual of collecting Styrofoam and burned out string lights, replacing pollution-causing decomposition with the reuse of the materials.

We invested in five pounds of direct sourced/fair trade coffee to serve on Sunday mornings and found it quite drinkable! Drinkable enough that Mission and Outreach began selling fair trade products and Church Life began serving it regularly.

We had a contest to name the art piece created by Mark and Vicki Davis—*6th Day*—and found the perfect place to display it permanently.

We celebrated each of nine baptisms by planting a tree in an endangered area.

We enjoyed a month-long Creation Celebration '23 that began with our chancel decorated with nature colored streamers and included a series of flash messages highlighting the Earth Care pledge signed by Session. Scripture, music, sermons, litany carried the theme into all aspects of worship.

We provided a creation-focused Lenten calendar and a series of liturgy-based Advent devotionals for observing the church year at home.

### We learned a lot about...

- ☑ ways that climate change inflicts harm on the poor and disadvantaged
- ☑ use of native plants to benefit all things living (even human beings)
- ☑ grants that can help us pay for cleaner heating and cooling
- ☑ advantages and varieties of electric vehicles
- ☑ and lots of little "green tips" to incorporate in our daily lives

We urged the Westminster Foundation Trustees to consider following the example of the General Assembly in withholding PCUSA investment in five companies not yet meeting minimum criteria.

We planted a pollinator garden in a city park and got our picture in the Lincoln Journal Star.

And we did a lot of advocacy and collaboration with our neighbors, for instance, joining Presbyterians for Earth Care, participating in a Faith and Climate luncheon, offering comments to our legislators from a faith-perspective, baking cookies for Season of Creation event at First Presbyterian.

And we finished up the year serving a pretty tasty plant-based chili at this year's cook-off.

The great British writer and naturalist, Sir David Attenborough, offers this counsel:

Our careless use of fossil fuels has set us the greatest and most urgent challenge we have ever faced. If we do make the transition to renewable energy at the lightning speed required, humankind will forever look back on this generation with gratitude, for we are indeed the first to truly understand the problem - and the last with a chance to do anything about it.

**Westminster friends, it matters that we aspire to be Green@Heart**

## Souper Bowl of Caring

On the weekend of February 11<sup>th</sup>, 150 million Americans will watch the Super Bowl football game. There will be parties with food, friendship, and fellowship, but at the same time, there will be other people worried about staying warm and finding their next meal. The Westminster Lincoln Youth Group invites you to join with others around the country in demonstrating God's love by loving our neighbors through the Souper Bowl of Caring.

Our youth will join the drive again this year, collecting money on the 11<sup>th</sup> for Matt Talbot Kitchen & Outreach and the Gathering Place in Lincoln. Matt Talbot has served the homeless and near homeless for nearly 28 years, with feeding the hungry as the core of their mission. The Gathering Place was founded in 1982 and is a soup kitchen that provides over 27,000 hot, nourishing evening meals to those who are homeless, near-homeless, or otherwise food-insecure in Lincoln each year.

We ask you to join this important movement, sharing God's love with those in need. Please give generously on Super Bowl Sunday -- look for youth group representatives holding soup pots by the sanctuary exits. Every dollar donated creates over \$20 for food charities, which means that a gift in any amount is greatly appreciated and truly makes a difference. Join us as we help #TackleHunger through @souperbowl. 100% of all donations benefit Matt Talbot Kitchen & Outreach and the Gathering Place.



### VBS 2024: Hero Hotline

*Called together to serve God.*

**June 3-7, 9:00 AM-12:00 PM**

It is time to register for VBS! Sign your children up to enjoy an interactive, energizing, Bible-based good time as they are called together to serve God. They will become Heroes and discover that answering God's call together means striving for the things that bring peace and the things that build each other up!

We will be collaborating with Good Shepherd Presbyterian again this year, but sessions will take place at Westminster, 2110 Sheridan Boulevard.

Registration is \$10/child (\$30 max/family) before May 31 . Register now at <https://westminster-presbyterian.mycokesburyvbs.com/>.

Adults and youth are also invited to become heroes with the kids. Whatever your interest or gift is, we have a place for you! You can build sets, create science/craft projects before VBS, work directly with the kids, provide materials, serve snacks, perform skits, or something else entirely. Sign-up at <https://westminster-presbyterian.mycokesburyvbs.com/> or contact Trish Souliere at [trish@westminsterlincoln.org](mailto:trish@westminsterlincoln.org) or at 402-475-6702 to explore the options.

## **Adult Ed presents “Hard Topics” on Sunday, February 4 in the Lounge 10:45 am**

How do we think and how are we to think about the events in Gaza and Israel that began on October 7? We have invited Peter Levitov, emeritus professor of international affairs and an immigration attorney to moderate a discussion on this complex topic.

### **Green @Heart**

Green at Heart has discovered two separate programs which collect used sneakers and used socks to keep these out of landfills. The sneaker program re-sells. The sock program recycles. There will be a collection box for these beginning the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Lent February 18 in the east entry, north alcove where Styrofoam was collected in December. Check your closets and bring them in!



**The Styrofoam Recycling Collection Project will continue until February 11!**  
Bring your Styrofoam recycling donations to the church soon!

### **Souper Bowl of Caring: Soup-er Bowl Can Drive and Collection**

Along with the Souper Bowl of Caring collection, this year the Westminster Youth Group is also sponsoring a Soup-er Bowl Soup Can drive, ending on February 11, Souper Bowl Sunday. We invite you to bring cans or boxes of soup to church and drop them off in the tote with a Souper Bowl of Caring sign at the top of the East stairs. Soup donations will benefit the Westminster Food Pantry.

The Souper Bowl of Caring is a national movement to fight hunger and poverty by encouraging giving in local communities. Westminster's monetary collection will be split between The Gathering Place and Matt Talbot Kitchen & Outreach. If you have any questions, contact Trish at [trish@westminsterlincoln.org](mailto:trish@westminsterlincoln.org).

### **LiNK Sunday: Pancakes & Sausage February 11, 2023 10:45 AM**

After the service on Sunday, February 11, the Children and Youth and Church Life Committees invite you to enjoy an early Shrove Tuesday breakfast of pancakes and sausage in Fellowship Hall.

### **Youth Group: Murder Mystery Sunday, February 18, 2023** Bring a friend!

### **LiNK Wednesdays | 5:30 PM-7:00 PM**

Wednesday nights are a great opportunity for kids to get together with their friends and have fun learning about God.

### **Sunday Youth Group | 6:00 PM-7:30 PM**

Join your church friends to talk, play games, do homework together, or just hang out.



Westminster Presbyterian Church

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



### Children and Youth Upcoming Events for 2024

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| Feb 11   | Souper Bowl Sunday/Pancake Breakfast            |
| Feb 18   | Youth Group Murder Mystery Party                |
| Mar 24   | Youth Group Urban Air                           |
| Mar 27   | Eggstravaganza                                  |
| Mar 31   | Cinnamon Roll Bar                               |
| Apr 14   | Youth Group Chopped                             |
| Apr 21   | Pretzel Bar                                     |
| Apr 28   | Youth Group Mini Golf                           |
| May 5    | Marathon Welcome                                |
| May 19   | Pentecost Cookies/Youth Group End of Year Party |
| June 3-7 | VBS: Hero Central with Good Shepherd            |
| July 14  | Youth Group Water Fun                           |
| Aug 8    | Star City Shores Pool Party                     |