

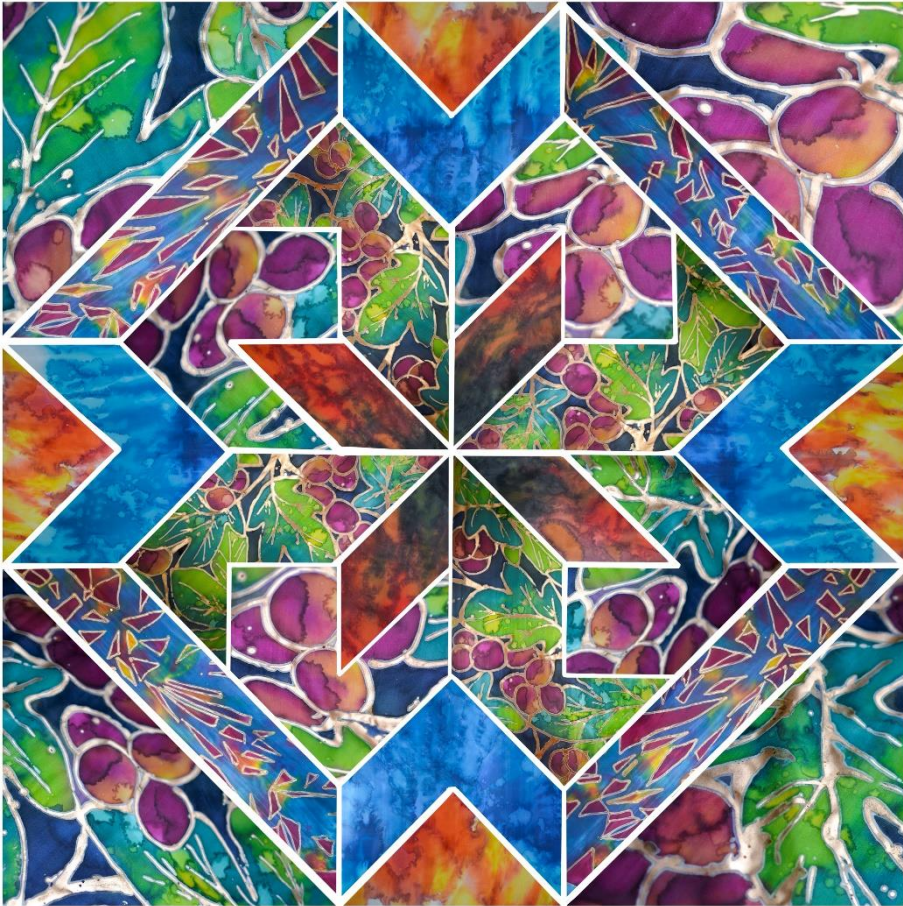
Westminster Presbyterian Church

2110 Sheridan Blvd. Lincoln, NE

December 15, 2024

Third Sunday of Advent

Words for the Beginning: Lessons and Carols



Lisle

Inspired by Luke 3:7-16 by Lisle Gwynn Garrity
Ink dyes and gold resist on silk, with digital collage

Prelude

“The Holly and the Ivy” by Herbert Sumsion

Welcome

Please sign and pass the friendship pad.

Invitation to Worship and Lighting of the Advent Candle

Gary & Glenna Haller

One: In a weary and worn world, how do we begin again? Where do we start?

All: Let us start small. Let us begin with what is right in front of us. Let us do the good that is ours to do, and let us do it with joy!

One: Yes, let us begin with joy. Today we light the candles of hope, peace, and joy.

(Leader lights the candles of Hope, Peace and Joy.)

All: May these lights remind us of what could be. May these lights inspire action. May the warmth of these lights fill us with joy.

One: May it be so! Amen.

*Hymn #132

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

*Call to Confession

Rev. Dr. Jimmy Shelbourn

*Prayer of Confession

Liberating God, there are days when the world can feel like it's crumbling. There are days when I doubt that I can make a difference. I ask myself, what could these two hands do? What could this one voice say? Shake me free of my own paralysis and self-doubt. Remind me that I am not called to fix everything. I am simply called to do the good that is mine to do. With hope in my heart and a fire in my bones, I pray. Amen.

*Time of Silent Confession

Lord, hear our prayer. ***Amen.***

*Assurance of Forgiveness

Rev. Dr. Jimmy Shelbourn

We pour water into the baptismal font at this time as a sign of our renewal in baptism and in confession. It is a visual reminder of the Nicene Creed's affirmation, "I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins," and Romans 5:5 that promises, "God's love is being poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit."

Believe and share the good news! ***In Jesus Christ, we are a new creation!***

*Passing of Christ's Peace

Rev. Chris Peters

Please share a sign of welcome and inclusion that is mutually comfortable (high five, handshake, fist/elbow bump) with your neighbors.

May the peace of Christ be with you. ***And also with you.***

Children may stay or be dismissed to Nursery or Faith Village.

Introduction

Rev. Chris Peters

Hymn #140

Once in Royal David's City (verses 1-3)

First Lesson

Genesis 3:8-15

Rev. Dr. Jimmy Shelbourn

Adam and Eve disobey God's command and disrupt the order and goodness of creation.

Hymn #121

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Second Lesson

Genesis 22:15-18

Elder Jaime Hemmerling

God promises that, through Abraham, all the peoples of the world will be blessed.

Special Music

“O Come, O Come Emmanuel” arr. Elaine Hagenburg

Reagan Hinze, Drea Reed, Catriona McNeally, Madalyn Rushing, Mary Young, Dylan Anderson,
Dylan Anderson, Josh Warner, Max Bower and Mason Bruggeman, Cellist – Alec Doyle

Third Lesson

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

Rev. Chris Peters

The people who walk in darkness receive the promise of the Messiah.

Hymn #87

Comfort, Comfort Now My People

Fourth Lesson

Isaiah 11:1-4, 6-9

Rev. Dr. Jimmy Shelbourn

The Messiah will come from the root of Jesse to restore the peace of creation.

Hymn #123

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear (verse 1)

Fifth Lesson

Luke 1:26-35

Elder Jaime Hemmerling

An angel appears to Mary and announces that she will bear a holy child.

Special Music

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”
Isaac Hemmerling, Electric Guitar

Sixth Lesson

Luke 2:1-7

Rev. Chris Peters

Joseph and Mary travel to Bethlehem, where Mary gives birth to her child.

Hymn #115

Away in a Manger

Seventh Lesson

Luke 2:8-16

Rev. Dr. Jimmy Shelbourn

Angels appear to shepherds in the fields and announce the birth of the Messiah.

Anthem

“Lully Lullay” by Philip Stopford

Eighth Lesson

Matthew 2:1-11

Elder Jaime Hemmerling

Magi from the East come seeking the Messiah and offer gifts to the baby Jesus.

Hymn #147

The First Nowell (verses 1-2, 3, 5)

Ninth Lesson

John 1:1-14

Rev. Chris Peters

The Word of God becomes flesh and lives among us, full of grace and truth.

Solo

“Comfort Ye” & “Every Valley” from *Messiah* by G.F. Handel
Dylan Anderson, tenor

*Prayers of the People

Elder Jaime Hemmerling

*The Lord’s Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

*Hymn #134

Joy to the World

*Charge & Benediction

Rev. Chris Peters

Postlude

“Toccatà on VENI EMMANUEL” by Andrew Carter

*Please rise in body or spirit for these parts of worship.

Today’s flowers are provided by Bill and Joan Roberts, in honor of their 54th Anniversary.

Today’s words for worship are adapted from *A Sanctified Art: Words for the Beginning Week 1 Words for Worship* by Rev. Sarah Are Speed / A Sanctified Art LLC / sanctifiedart.org

Westminster welcomes and values children in worship. All kids and their families are welcome to pick up a blue Children’s Worship Bag in the narthex (Sheridan Blvd. foyer). If a parent feels a break is needed for their child during the service, our **Infant Room** is available. This is at the north end of the Narthex.

Giving to Westminster’s Mission and Ministry

At Church: An offering to support Westminster may be placed in our Giving Baskets following the service. These are located by the Sheridan Blvd. doors in the narthex and near the top of the stairs in the sanctuary on the Garden Room / South side. Look for the baskets and signs that read “Giving Basket.” Ushers monitor the baskets and collect the offerings following the service. **For online giving**, scan the QR code.



Ministers: The whole congregation

Pastors: Rev. Chris Peters & Rev. Dr. Jimmy Shelbourn

Liturgist: Elder Jaime Hemmerling

Music Director: Dr. Mary Young

Organist: John Ross

Director of Children & Youth: Trish Souliere

Advent Candle Lighting: Gary & Glenna Haller

Greeters: Kathy Phillip and Josh Whitfield

Ushers: Barbara Wright-Chollet, Robyn Uebele, Barb Andersen, Martha Kingsbury

Dishwashers: Barb & Dave Arunski

Sanctuary Audio and Livestream: Stephan Biheng



*“I am the vine,
you are the branches . . .”*

The week of Dec. 15, 2024

Westminster Presbyterian Church is an inclusive faith family, inspired by Jesus Christ, to call, nurture, and empower disciples.

Adult Ed | 10:45 AM | Lounge

Dec. 15: Foster Care is a prominent need in Nebraska with over 3500 youth involved in the child welfare system placed in foster care. Providing a loving and caring home for Nebraska’s most vulnerable population is a rewarding endeavor. But what does fostering entail? What struggles do foster parents face? How do those who foster cope with the internal, external, and relationship conflict they can face in parenting a youth that is not their own? Monica DeMent, Program Director at Better Living Foster Care and Family Services, will provide a brief overview of the foster care system, common struggles foster parents face, how foster families can support youth through trauma and grief, and how agencies in the community support foster parents towards successful fostering experiences.

Dec. 22: Join us for an exploration – starting with the response of Joseph of Nazareth to a dream – to find how hope can emerge from despair when we take the risk of faith. The session will be led by Pastor Jimmy Shelbourn.

All Church Christmas Caroling | December 18, 5:30 PM

Join us for caroling through the neighborhood! We will leave church at 5:30 pm and finish up with hot cider and cookies in Cole Hall. Help us to share with our neighbors the HOPE, LOVE, JOY and PEACE of Advent.

Youth Group: Christmas Party | December 15

The Youth Group Christmas Party will take place today at 6 PM. Please plan on bringing a wrapped gift valued at under \$5 for the gift exchange and your favorite snack to share.

Welcome Dylan to our Westminster Staff!

Stop by the front desk this week if you haven't already, to meet Dylan Douglas, who is our new Communications and Administration Coordinator, overseeing communications from the communications@westminsterlincoln.org email. If you have eVine, website, social media, Messenger monthly newsletter, livestream slideshow or other information to share with the congregation, please let Dylan know. Joanne Gabriel will continue to put together our Vine bulletin notes and church calendar, so sending items to both Dylan and Joanne will be helpful as we begin this new time. Dylan will be working 12 hours on-site at the front desk, most often Mon., Wed., and Fri., 9 AM to 1 PM, carrying out communications and admin tasks as well as 10 hours remotely each week.

What would Goldilocks say about water?

That you want to get it "just right!" Too much or too little water can be dangerous for all living beings, and climate change is just pushing the consequences to new extremes. Both floods and droughts cause disruption and hardship, especially for those with limited resources. Your Environmental Justice action for December is to check out Presbyterian Disaster Relief <https://pda.pcusa.org/> to learn about ways that our church responds—and see how you can help!

Recycle Styrofoam and Christmas Lights

Foam and Christmas lights are trickling in. Remember, you don't have to send these items to the landfill. Green@Heart has found a place to take EPS #6 (expanded polystyrene) the rigid white packing foam that protects items while shipping. Egg and food cartons and packing peanuts can go in orange Hefty bags. We also have a destination for defunct Christmas lights. Containers are by the east doors.

December Prairie Readers | December 18

Prairie Readers will have their Holly Jolly Christmas party on December 18 at 1 PM in the lounge. There will be sweet treats, a favorite film, *A Christmas Memory*, and lots of lively conversation.

Winter Overnight Lock-in | January 3-4

On January 3, we will have our annual winter lock-in. Plan to play games, eat pizza, and hang out with friends all night at church. We start at 8:00 PM on January 3 and finish at 8:00 AM on Saturday, January 4. All youth who plan on attending must register here <https://forms.gle/HW114pPN9Je7NueS7>.

Could you take a turn as dishwasher?

We are still in need of dishwashing volunteers for the **fourth Sundays of the even numbered months**. Step up and help Westminster fulfill our pledge to be “green.”

Artist Lisle Gwynn Garrity Comments on Bulletin Image

At the center of this quilt square collage, a pinwheel of fire spins. It represents the Holy Spirit impelling the world to turn. Surrounding it are four petal shapes that bloom like a flower. They are each filled with branches of fruit. When we align ourselves with the movement of the Spirit, we can do the good that is ours to do. Our actions can bear good fruit.

The petals and pinwheel are encapsulated by the outline of a blue cross. Four walls of the cross contain broken fragments. In stark contrast to the lush fruit, the fragments are like shards of glass. They symbolize the sins John the Baptist sees present amongst the crowds: extortion, coercion, and the hoarding of power and resources. And yet, these fragments are linked together by blue arrows filled with the waters of baptism. There is a way to begin again.

From each cardinal direction, a triangle of Holy Spirit fire faces inward, pointing us to baptism and transformation. When we do the good that is ours to do, we bear good fruit—fruit that repairs and nourishes, fruit that grows into the four corners of the earth. —**Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity**

Staff Schedules

Pastor Chris will be off this Thursday, Dec. 19 as well as the week between Christmas and New Year’s Day. He will return to the office on Jan. 2.

Week Beginning Dec. 15

<p><u>Sun. (Dec. 15) Advent 3</u> 9:30 AM Worship, Faith Village, Lessons & Carols 10:45 AM Adult Education 12 Noon Sudanese Worship 6 PM Youth Group Christmas Party</p> <p><u>Mon. (Dec. 16)</u> 11 AM Explorers Bible Study, Library 6:30 PM Scout Pack Meeting, Cole Hall</p> <p><u>Tues. (Dec. 17)</u> 9:45 AM Staff Meeting 5 PM Ladies' Night Out—Billy's 7 PM Faith and Cancer Support Group, Library</p> <p><u>Wed. (Dec. 18)</u> 1 PM Prairie Readers, Lounge 1:30 PM Hearts and Hands</p>	<p>5:30 PM All Church Caroling 5:30 PM Wed. Night Children & Youth, Caroling 7 PM Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary</p> <p><u>Thurs. (Dec. 19)</u> 9 AM Friendship Home, FH 7 PM Camera Club, Lounge 7 PM Lincoln Continentals Rehearsal, Sanctuary</p> <p><u>Sat. (Dec. 21)</u> 1 PM Funeral for Phyllis Pauley, Sanctuary</p> <p><u>Sun. (Dec. 22) Advent 4</u> 9:30 AM Worship, Faith Village 10:45 AM Advent Workshop, Fellowship Hall 12 Noon Sudanese Worship 2 PM Bell Rehearsal, Sanctuary</p>
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Worship services are available on-line at this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/@WestminsterLincoln/streams>

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