

Westminster Presbyterian Church

2110 Sheridan Blvd. Lincoln, NE

December 29, 2024

First Sunday in Christmastide



*Liturgical Banner for Words for the Beginning
by Hannah Garrity*

Prelude

“In Dulci Jubilo” by J.S. Bach

Welcome

Please sign and pass the friendship pad.

*Call to Worship

Deacon Tami Wellmann

One: Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens!

All: Praise God on the heights!

One: Sun and moon: praise God! All bright stars: praise God!

**All: Let all these praise the Lord, because God gave the command,
and they were created!**

*Hymn #146

Gentle Mary Laid Her Child

*Call to Confession

Deacon Tami Wellmann

*Prayer of Confession

Lord God, we praise you for sending light into the world. We confess that we live as though the light had never defeated darkness. We confess that we ignore the Savior you sent to be among us and to live with us. We have kept the birth of your Son confined to a season. Forgive us for not opening our eyes to Jesus. Help us rejoice in the light so that your grace can illuminate the darkened places of our hearts. Assure us of our pardon that we may find rest in you. Amen.

*Time of Silent Confession

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

*Response to Confession #437

You Are the Lord, Giver of Mercy!

You are the Lord, giver of mercy!

You are the Christ, giver of mercy!

You are the Lord, giver of mercy!

*Assurance of Forgiveness

Deacon Tami Wellmann

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!

***Response of Praise #113 Angels We Have Heard on High (refrain only)**
Glo-or-ia... In excelsis De-o
Glo-or-ia... In excelsis De-o.

***Passing of the Peace** Rev. Dr. Jimmy Shelbourn
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.***

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture

Gospel Reading	Luke 2:21-35	N.T. pg. 59
Gospel Reading	Matthew 11:3	N.T. pg. 11

The Word of the Lord. ***Thanks be to God.***

Special Music “Heaven on Earth” by Gilbert M. Martin
Drea Reed, soloist

Sermon “Searching for Rescue?”
Rev. Dr. Jimmy Shelbourn

***The Apostles’ Creed (Contemporary Translation)** Rev. Dr. Jimmy Shelbourn
I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Hymn #145** ***What Child Is This?

***Prayers of the People** Deacon Tami Wellmann

***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 #546**

Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing

***Charge & Benediction**

Rev. Dr. Jimmy Shelbourn

Postlude

“Postlude on MENDELSSOHN” by David Willcocks

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

The flowers are given in honor of Mark and Deb Schorr's wedding anniversary, who were married in the Westminster sanctuary 40 years ago today on December 29, 1984.

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: Deacon Tami Wellmann

Music Director: Dr. Mary Young

Organist: John Ross

Director of Children & Youth: Trish Souliere

Greeters: Joyce Douglas and Marilyn Hood

Ushers: Schafer Family

Dishwashers: Lisa & Steve McConnell

Sanctuary Audio and Livestream: Stephan Biheng



*"I am the vine,
you are the branches . . ."*

The week of Dec. 29, 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. 29: No Adult Ed

Jan. 5: "Sleep in Heavenly Peace" will provide a speaker on their work for children which includes making bunk beds and quilts.

January 12: TeamMates Mentoring of Lincoln will speak on their program.

January 19: Laurie McCubbin, Director, will speak about Westminster Preschool.

January 26: Malone Community Center speaker

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>.

Lunch Bunch

Lunch Bunch will meet on Tues., Jan. 7, 11:30 AM, at Mi Tierra (South location), 5500 Old Cheney. R.S.V.P. to 402-290-5888 or jimkinkennon@gmail.com.

Prairie Readers will begin the 2025 reading season on January 15 at 1 PM in the lounge. Diana Wild will lead the discussion of *The Guncle* by Steven Rowley.

Fresh Water or Bottles and Bags?

According to National Geographic, an estimated 80% of the plastic debris in our oceans comes from land-based sources—mostly our plastic bags, bottle caps, plastic water bottles, and Styrofoam cups. Besides the obvious threat to marine life, microplastics are now being found in the internal organs of land animals (us). Is our convenience worth the damage? What are habits you could change?

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.”

Recycle Styrofoam and Christmas Lights

2 bags full!

Plastilite provides the giant bags to return EPS #6 (packing styrofoam). They are the factory that makes it and very responsibly collects it for recycling. So far we have filled two bags; last year we delivered four to Omaha.

If you utilize orange Hefty bags with your collections service, that's where egg cartons, food containers and packing peanuts can go.

When can you bring foam for recycling?

- Whenever the church is open for worship or scheduled activities.
- Monday, Wednesday, Friday 9AM-1PM.
- If you call in advance and are told you will be let in. 402- 475-6702.

The collection bag is inside the east doors.

Don't forget about those Christmas lights!

THAT'S A WRAP!

Another year of giving to those who otherwise might not receive a gift - The Angel Tree!

Thank you, Church Life, for helping to deliver the items to The Salvation Army. Thank You Westminster congregation. A special Thank You to the youth for the time and money.

Your Mission and Outreach Team

Staff Schedules

Pastor Chris is off this week and will return to the office on Jan. 2.

Joanne Gabriel will be switching to a 4-day work week after Jan. 1. She will be in the office Mondays through Thursdays.

Beginning on Jan. 3, the church office will be closed at 1 PM on Fridays.

Liturgical Banner for Words for the Beginning

By Hannah Garrity

This liturgical banner is like a quilt, as it integrates our weekly quilt square patterns into its border. It is designed for the paper lace medium, however, I imagine that quilters would be able to adjust the design to their medium.

The central motif is the star of Bethlehem, an image that is common in quilt patterning and which reaches into each of our hearts with nostalgic memory. In the church, this symbol marks the beginning of our liturgical year and the moment when the Magi's journey guides them to Jesus. It reminds me of waiting; of the ways we wait for spring, for a baby to be born, for the coming of Christ. In this banner design, each of the weekly quilt square patterns represent the weekly themes we are journeying with this season: You are a blessing; We can't go alone; Do the good that is yours to do; Hope is worth the risk; Love knows your name; Don't forget to laugh; The road isn't straight. What words and reminders do you remember—ones that your caregivers handed down? How do they act as beacons, as north stars guiding you through your day to day and through each decade?

Welcome Dylan to our Westminster Staff!

Dylan Douglas 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.

Poinsettias

If you would like one, please take a poinsettia home after the worship service today.

Week Beginning Dec. 29

<p><u>Sun. (Dec. 29)</u> 9:30 AM Worship, Faith Village Pajama Party 12 Noon Sudanese Worship</p> <p><u>Mon. (Dec. 30)</u> 11 AM Explorers Bible Study, Library</p>	<p><u>Wed. (Jan. 1) New Year's Day</u> Office closed for the holiday.</p> <p><u>Sun. (Jan. 5)</u> 9:30 AM Worship with Communion, Faith Village 10:45 AM Adult Ed, Lounge 12 Noon Sudanese Worship</p>
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Worship services are available on-line at this link:

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

joanne@westminsterlincoln.org

402-475-6702