

Westminster Presbyterian Church

2110 Sheridan Blvd. Lincoln, NE

June 1, 2025

Seventh Sunday of Easter



Please rise in body or spirit for the parts of worship with an asterisk () before the title.
Parts of worship that are ***bolded and italicized*** are for all worshippers to read together aloud.

Prelude

“Scherzo” by Eugène Gigout

Welcome

Please sign and pass the friendship pad.

Special Announcement: Pentecost Offering

Carolyn Harp

***Call to Worship (Psalm 97:1-2, 11-12; Common English Bible adapted)** Rev. Chris Peters

One: The Lord rules! Let all the earth rejoice!

Many: Rejoice in the Lord! Give thanks to God's holy name!

One: Let all the islands celebrate!

Many: Rejoice in the Lord! Give thanks to God's holy name!

One: God's throne is built on righteousness and justice.

Many: Rejoice in the Lord! Give thanks to God's holy name!

One: Light is planted like seed for the righteous person, joy too for those whose heart is right.

Many: Rejoice in the Lord! Give thanks to God's holy name!

***Hymn #815**

Give to the Winds Thy Fears

***Call to Confession**

Rev. Dr. Jimmy Shelbourn

***Prayer of Confession**

Gracious Power, you call us to your everlasting springs to be drenched and reformed, but we fail to heed you. We do not turn with love to our neighbors to ourselves, or to you. Forgive us for our failings, shield us from our due, and guide us into unity with all, for the sake of the whole world. Amen.

***Time of Silent Confession**

Lord, hear our prayer. *Amen.*

***Response to Confession**

You Make Beautiful Things (chorus)

You make beautiful things, You make beautiful things out of the dust.

You make beautiful things, You make beautiful things out of us.

***Assurance of Forgiveness**

... Believe and share the good news!

In Jesus Christ, we are a new creation!

***Response of Praise #589**

Alleluia (sung through twice)

Alleluia, alleluia. Alleluia, alleluia.

Alleluia, alleluia. Now the Lord is risen indeed.

***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

New Testament

Acts 16:16-34

N.T. pg. 136

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

Sermon

“God’s Vision for Freedom”

Rev. Chris Peters

*Hymn #359

Freedom is Coming

Moment of Gratitude: Reaffirmation of Call to Covenant Community

Invitation to the Offering

Rev. Chris Peters

Offering & Anthem

“Sing Gently” by Eric Whitacre

May we sing together always
May our voices be soft
May our singing be music for others
And may it keep others aloft.

Note about anthem: This piece was written during the pandemic and recorded as a virtual choir, highlighting humans’ ability to make music even when they aren’t physically together. Its message is that we find strength standing together in hard times and never ever stop singing.

*Hymn #606

Doxology

***Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures here below;
Praise God above ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.***

*Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord’s Supper

Invitation

Rev. Dr. Jimmy Shelbourn

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. ***And also with you.***
Lift up your hearts. ***We lift them to the Lord.***
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

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.

Blessing and Sharing of the Elements

Music During Communion

“And Can It Be” by Dan Forrest
Mary Young, soloist

Prayer After Communion

*Hymn #769

For Everyone Born (verses 1-3, 5)

*Charge & Benediction

Postlude

“Toccatà” by Eugène Gigout

Today’s Call to Worship is adapted from the lectionary Psalm, Psalm 67, using the Common English Bible translation. Other words for worship, or “liturgy,” are adapted from the resource *Feasting on the Word Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year C, Volume 1.*, Rev. Dr. Kimberly Bracken Long, editor.

Flowers are provided by Joyce Douglas to honor those serving in the military both past and present as well as friends and family who have passed.

Westminster welcomes and values children in worship. All kids and their families are welcome to pick up a Children’s Worship bag or blue Infant Bag in the Narthex (Sheridan Blvd. foyer). A nursery is available for kids under 5. 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: We have resumed giving through an offering in our worship service, leaning on the theology of offering as a response of gratitude to God’s word in worship. Checks may be made out to Westminster Presbyterian. General donations go to support the annual budget of the church, which includes Children/Youth support, staffing, building use, worship, and mission. You may also place an offering in our Giving Baskets following the service. These are located near the exits. 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

Music Director: Dr. Mary Young

Organist: John Ross

Director of Children & Youth: Trish Souliere

Greeters: Kathy Phillip & Josh Whitfield

Ushers: Diana Wild, Debra Schleining, David Anderson, Joan Roberts

Dishwashers: Kelly Braswell-Burbach & Dorrie Gage

Sanctuary Audio & Livestream: Stephan Biheng and Dale Minter

Communion Servers: Jim Hlava, Susie Hughes, Marilyn Hood, Karen Hoffman & Rachel Hoffman



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

The week of June 1, 2025

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

Sunday Faith Village

Faith Village is taking a break for the summer to give families a chance to attend worship together. We will meet again in August.

Adult Ed. Classes in June

10:45 AM in the Lounge (exception: June 15 meets at 11 AM)

- June 1** Glenna Haller will share her experience with and information about the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, including how it relates to all people.
- June 8** No Adult Ed. due to Presbyterians in the Park.
- June 15** Rev. Dr. Jimmy Shelbourn will give a presentation based on “Immigrant’s Song” from Scotland, reflecting on emigration from one’s home.
- June 22** Tom Pappas will present some of his experience with the book Forgiveness and will lead discussion, Part 1. It’s not required that you read the book to attend.
- June 29** Discussion on Forgiveness, Part 2.

“Presbyterians in the Park” on June 8

You are invited to worship outdoors at the “Presbyterians in the Park” celebration on **Sunday, June 8, at 10:30 a.m. at the Antelope Park Shildneck Bandshell**. This special outdoor worship service offers a joyful time of faith and fellowship in one of Lincoln’s most scenic parks. Attendees are encouraged to bring lawn chairs or blankets for seating.

Following the service, everyone is welcome to a potluck lunch in the Auld Pavilion. Church Life will be serving chicken, rolls, and pork and beans. Members with last names:

A–M are asked to bring desserts

N–Z are invited to bring side dishes

A free-will donation of \$2 is suggested to help cover expenses. “Presbyterians in the Park” is a beloved Westminster tradition that brings the church family together in celebration of community and God’s creation. All are welcome!



Mission/Outreach is pleased to bring Equal Exchange Coffee and Equal Exchange Organic Chocolate to Westminster friends. The coffee you enjoy during the fellowship hour is also Equal Exchange. By choosing the Equal Exchange brand, we are making a strong statement about our values as a community.

Available for Purchase: We give the opportunity to purchase Equal Exchange products during Fellowship Hour after services on the first Sunday of each month. Thank you for supporting our ongoing commitment to making these products available.

Westminster Presbyterian Women Picnic in the Park Monday, June 2, 12 Noon

Stransky Park (17th and Perkins Streets) under the Dome

Presbyterian Women just completed a year-long study on eco justice informed by Scripture. To celebrate, let's gather in God's creation and share a meal at a park. Bring your own lunch and drink. Carpool from the church parking lot at 11:45 AM or meet us there. (The event is cancelled if it rains.) Stransky Park is near Westminster. The park grounds are level, with accessible walkways and a covered table area. For more information contact Linda Burchard at (402) 477-5572.

June Lunch Bunch Gathering

Lunch Bunch will meet Tuesday, June 3, 11:30 A.M., at Watering Hole East, 8300 Northwoods. This is a new venue for us and is recommended by many. Note that this is the East location. **RSVP to Jimkinkennon@gmail.com or 402-290-5888.**

WPC YG Mission Trip | June 12-15

Some of our youth will be taking a summer trek to Kansas City to serve, to Branson to see David at the Sight and Sound Theater, and also spend a day at a theme park.

Prairie Readers—June Meeting

Prairie Readers will meet in the Lounge at 1 PM on June 18. Susie Hughes will lead the discussion of Paradise by Lizzie Johson, a completing account of one town's experience of and recovery from a devastating wildfire. Everyone is welcome!

VBS Egypt: Joseph's Journey from Prison to Palace | July 14-18

9:00 AM-12:00 PM

Family drama...Lies and subterfuge...A faked death. Palace intrigue....Natural disaster...A national hero...

These aren't plot elements in the latest binge-worthy show. These larger-than-life events are just part of the amazing life of Joseph, son of Jacob. You can read about Joseph's journey from the prison to the palace in Genesis 37–50, or you can bring them to life at this year's Egypt: Joseph's Journey from Prison to Palace VBS! At Egypt, everyone gets to explore first-hand the culture of Joseph's world. Alongside Joseph, kids will experience the heartbreaking trials, joyous victories, and tear-filled celebrations of this unique Bible hero.

When? July 14-18, 2025 9:00 AM-12:00 PM

Where? Good Shepherd Presbyterian 8300 E Pointe Rd

Cost? \$15 per child, maximum of \$45 per family.

Register now! <https://vbspro.events/p/gspcwpc25>.

Questions? Contact Trish by email at trish@westminsterlincoln.org or by phone or text at 402-570-0163.

We can't wait to explore Egypt together!!

Synod School | July 20-25

Storm Lake, Iowa

Synod School is a learning and personal enrichment experience for people of all ages in an environment of hospitality, healing, and hope. The week is designed for laity, clergy, individuals and families with classes and activities for adults, youth, and children.

Questions? Contact Trish Souliere by email, trish@westminsterlincoln.org, or by text or phone, 402-570-0163.

Staff Schedule

Pastor Chris will be away twice this summer in support of WPC Youth! On June 12-13, he will attend the Kansas City 'mission/service' component of the youth Mission/Fun trip. The week of July 28th, he will serve as a chaperone on the Presbyterian Triennium trip! Triennium is a gathering of Presbyterian youth from across the country in Louisville, KY.

Week Beginning June 1

<p><u>Sun. (June 1)</u> 9:30 AM Worship, Communion, Equal Exchange Coffee 10:45 AM Adult Ed., Lounge 12 Noon Sudanese Worship</p> <p><u>Mon. (June 2)</u> 12 PM Presbyterian Women Picnic in the Park 7 PM Recovery Group</p> <p><u>Tues. (June 3)</u> 10:30 AM Lincoln City Library Summer Program, FH 11:30 AM Lunch Bunch 5 PM Adult Education, Conference Room</p>	<p><u>Wed. (June 4)</u> 1 PM Hearts & Hands, Library 6:30 PM Choir Gathering at the Zander Home</p> <p><u>Thurs. (June 5)</u> 6 PM Lincoln Continentals, Sanctuary</p> <p><u>Sat. (June 7)</u> 10:30 AM Jean Carol Murphy Memorial Service, Sanctuary 11:30 AM Funeral Reception, FH</p> <p><u>Sun. (June 8)</u> 10:30 AM Presbyterians in the Park—Worship and Potluck 12 Noon Sudanese Worship</p>
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Worship services are available on-line at this link:

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



COVENANT NETWORK OF PRESBYTERIANS

Gracious and loving God, You have created each of us in Your image, called us beloved, and gathered us into one body—diverse, beautiful, and whole. We thank You for the ever-widening welcome of Your church and for the holy work of justice and reconciliation.

Many: God of love, make us bold in welcome and faithful in witness.

One: For the gifts and callings of LGBTQIA+ brothers and sisters, for their courage, faith, and perseverance—we give thanks. Forgive us when we have been silent in the face of injustice, when we have closed doors You meant to open.

Many: God of mercy, open our hearts, open our church.

One: Empower us to be a community of healing and affirmation, where every voice is heard, every gift is nurtured, and every life is honored with dignity and joy. Let our actions reflect Your boundless grace and our words speak truth in love.

Many: God of justice, equip us to act with compassion and courage.

One: In this time of division and fear, send Your Spirit to unite us in hope. Let our welcome be wide, our love be deep, and our commitment be unwavering.

Many: God of peace, bind us together in Christ's inclusive love.

One: Renew in us a vision of Your church where all may flourish. Give us strength to live into our covenant, joy to celebrate each person's sacred worth, and courage to stand with those still yearning for belonging. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, who welcomes all to the table.

All: Amen.

A History of Westminster, Covenant Network, and Inclusion

The Covenant Network of Presbyterians has sought since 1997 to strengthen the church by working for the full inclusion of LGBTQIA+ people in its life and leadership. CNP is a network of more than 400 congregations and thousands of individuals committed to extending authentic welcome to all people.

Westminster has been connected to the Covenant Network going all the way back to their founding year of 1997. That means Westminster's Session or leadership made a commitment related to our congregation for a more inclusive and welcoming church nearly thirty years ago.

In 2017, Adult Education hosted a series by pastoral leadership on topics such as what the Bible really says about inclusion in the church and Session engaged in a number of discussions.

In 2019, Westminster adopted a new mission statement that emphasizes our vision to be an "inclusive faith family." That mission fully states, "Westminster Presbyterian Church is an inclusive faith family, inspired by Jesus Christ, to call, nurture, and empower disciples. We welcome you wherever you are on your spiritual journey."

In 2021, Covenant Network Director Brian Ellison met with Westminster's Session via Zoom to explore the concept of welcome as a congregation navigating a new season of church life with a new pastor and post-COVID shutdowns. That led many in our leadership to want to pursue further connection and conversation.

In 2023, Westminster hosted Covenant Conversations: Nebraska, welcoming LGBTQIA+ people of faith from Lincoln, Omaha, Hastings, and other communities. This was a day of worship, learning, and connecting. The following day, Rev. Ellison preached at Westminster in worship.

In February 2025, Westminster's Session reviewed and voted to affirm the Covenant Network's Call to Covenant Community. This commitment is one of several we uphold in this year along with our continuing Earth Care Congregation certification and our connection to the PCUSA's Matthew 25 initiative.