



WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

First Sunday of Christmas

December 31, 2023



Westminster Presbyterian Church extends an enthusiastic welcome, in Christ's name, to all who worship here or join us in fellowship. Our church family seeks to embody God's boundless love by embracing, liberating and empowering people – whoever they are and wherever they may be on their faith journeys – to realize the transforming power of Christ in our congregation, community, and the world beyond.



A Covenant Network Congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
An Earth Care Congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
A Matthew 25 Church of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
A Stephen Ministry Congregation

TODAY AT WESTMINSTER

9:45 – 11:15 p.m. **Nursery Care** for infants and toddlers in Preschool Suite D

10:00 – 10:55 a.m. **Worship** in the Sanctuary

Time with Our Children (approximately 10:15 a.m.)

The young and young-at-heart are invited to join the worship leader at the front of the sanctuary. Following the TIME WITH OUR CHILDREN, young ones through second grade will be escorted to the Preschool Suite. Children are welcome to remain in worship.

10:20 – 11:00 a.m. **Children's Programming**
Age 2 to Grade 2 in Preschool Suite Classroom C

11:00 – 11:45 a.m. **Coffee and tea** in the Meeting Room
(adjacent to Rodney Chapel)

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For descriptions of our programs for children and youth, visit wpc.org/children-youth.

The Music: The Westminster Choir is enjoying a well-deserved break this morning and will return to the choir loft next Sunday. Rehearsals are on Wednesdays at 7 p.m. and Sundays at 8 a.m. For more information or to participate, contact TonyThurman@wpc.org or speak with him after the service.

The sanctuary flowers are given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of Donna Nelson, beloved grandmother, mother, and wife by Fred Nelson and family. Consider giving the flowers for Sunday worship to remember or honor loved ones or to celebrate an event. Please contact Linda Watson at (302) 571-6719 or lwatson@ycst.com.

Westminster's Prayer Team prays for the needs of our community. Please submit your prayer request to wpcprayerlist@gmail.com or online at wpc.org/care-support.

You can make a contribution to Westminster Presbyterian Church by visiting our website at wpc.org and clicking the "Donate" button or scan this QR code on your smart phone. → We accept donations by bank withdrawal, credit card, and debit card.



ORDER OF WORSHIP

~ Passages in **bold** print may be spoken by all. At the asterisk (*) please stand in body or rise in spirit. ~

TOWER CHIME

Tim Ohmart

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASSING OF THE PEACE

PRELUDE

Toccata on *Angels We have Heard on High*

Richard Elliott

CALL TO WORSHIP

We stand at the turning of the year,

**looking back on what has been
and ahead to what is to come.**

Our faith is fragile because our world is plagued by suffering and evil.

Our hope is dimming as our world is torn apart by hate and violence.

Our world is but a shadow of the greatness for which God created it.

And yet we cling to the vision we discover in the Scriptures:

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness will never overcome it.

*HYMN NO. 119

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

MENDELSSOHN

OPENING PRAYER

Mighty God,

who brought us through the darkness of the night

to the light of this new day,

we give you thanks:

for the light of beauty that whispers its truth in surprising ways,

for the light of compassion that washes life-battered feet,

and for the light of joy that glows even in the darkness of grief and suffering.

We pray that you will guide us through this year:

whether in dark or light,

whether in heartbreak or gladness

whether in trial or celebration,

that your light might shine in us and through us

into the dark corners of our world.

We pray in the name of Jesus, the light of the world. Amen.

TIME WITH OUR CHILDREN

(See "Today at Westminster" on page 2 for more information.)

SCRIPTURE LESSON

John 1:1-9

New Testament, page 79

SERMON

Gregory Knox Jones

*HYMN NO. 108

Of the Father's Love Begotten

DIVINUM MYSTERIUM

Offering

OFFERTORY

Still, Still, Still

Paul Manz

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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 NO. 152

What Star Is This, with Beams So Bright

PUER NOBIS NASCITUR

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

In Thee Is Gladness

J.S. Bach

Please join us for coffee, tea, and fellowship in the Meeting Room.

New to Westminster? Welcome! We're so glad you're here. If you are joining us for the first time, please introduce yourself via our contact form on the [I'm New](#) page of our website or scan this QR code to get there from your mobile device. We look forward to getting to know you.



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ADULT EDUCATION

TODAY, DECEMBER 31

NO ADULT EDUCATION

SUNDAY, JANUARY 7

Congregational Health Network

Presented by the Rev. Patti V. Weikart, M.A., M. Div.

10:10 a.m. | Classroom 6 and Zoom

Zoom link: bit.ly/wpc-adult-ed-zoom

The Congregational Health Network (CHN) is a group of faith communities and service organizations in Delaware collaborating with Nemours to meet the needs of patients with Sickle Cell Disease and their families. They are offered confidential conversations with Pastor Pat, mentors, life skills training, and a food coach. No religious or church affiliation is required to take advantage of any of these offerings.



Rev. Weikart is a Minister of Word and Sacrament of the PC(USA), Chaplain/Research Associate at Nemours Children's Health since 2016, former Client Executive with IBM Corporation.

Let's Talk About It

10:10 a.m. | Ruth Christie Room

We are happy to bring back this beloved series. Join us for a lively discussion of a timely topic that is current that week/month.



ONGOING/WEEKLY

Online Bible Studies

Midweek Manna Bible Study

Wednesdays | 12 p.m. | Zoom

Facilitator: The Rev. Sudie Niesen Thompson

Contact: sniesenthompson@wpc.org

Thursday Evening Bible Study

Thursdays | 6–7 p.m. | Zoom

*Facilitators: Randy Williamson
and Mary Anne Peters*

Contact: randywilliamson1@comcast.net

Peace and Justice Thursday Evening Education Event

Westminster's Peace & Justice Work Group wishes everyone a very Happy New Year with gratitude for the many blessings God provides.

On **Thursday, January 4, 2024, at 7 p.m.**, we encourage you to participate in a Zoom program – *The Healing Path* – presented by contemplative practitioner and clinical psychologist James Finley, sponsored by the Community for Integrative Learning. For more details and to register, visit cil-de.org/events.

Our Peace & Justice Work Group education series via Zoom resumes on **Thursday, January 11, 2024, at 7 p.m.** We look forward to seeing you!

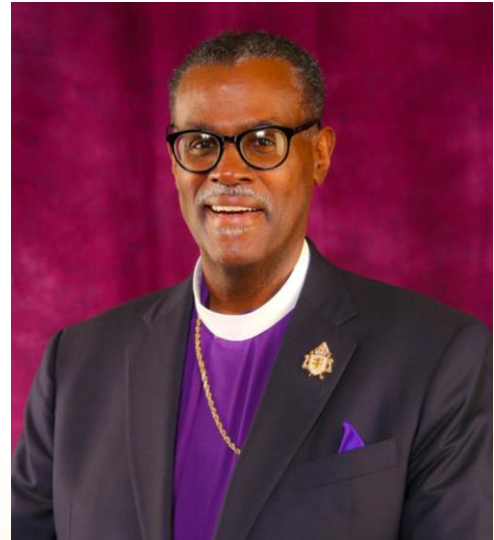
For full descriptions of our programs and more adult education and small group opportunities, visit WPC.ORG/ADULTS or check our events calendar at WPC.ORG/EVENTS. Select adult education programs are available as a livestream/recording on our [YouTube channel](#).

GUEST PREACHER ON JANUARY 7

The Rev. Dr. Silvester Beaman

The Reverend Dr. Silvester Beaman was the pastor of Bethel AME Church in Wilmington for 28 years. He delivered the Benediction at the inauguration of President Joe Biden in 2021, and later that year was consecrated as a Bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal Church serving a district that includes South Africa, Namibia, and Angola.

In September, 2023, he was appointed chair of the President's Advisory Council on African Diaspora Engagement. **We are honored to have him preach at Westminster on Sunday, January 7.**



Music at Westminster

JOHN S. DIXON, ORGAN

Sunday, January 14, 2024 | 3 p.m.



Experience the gift of music in our beautiful sanctuary as the 2023-2024 Westminster Concert Series continues on Sundays at 3 p.m. On January 14, John Dixon, the organist and composer-in-residence at Providence Presbyterian Church in Virginia Beach, will present a solo recital featuring his original compositions. All are invited. A free-will offering is requested.

Please join us in person or livestream over WPC's [YouTube channel](#)!

PASTORAL STAFF

The Rev. Dr. Gregory Knox Jones, Head of Staff
The Rev. Sudie Niesen Thompson, Associate Pastor
The Rev. Jill Getty, Pastoral Care Assistant

MUSIC STAFF

Dr. F. Anthony Thurman, Director of Music/Organist
Rebecca Hughes; Margaret Mezzacappa; Teddy Austin; Jerry Polman, Section Leaders
Emily Haas, Director of Music for Children and Youth
Cole Walker, Choral Assistant for Children and Youth

VIDEOGRAPHERS

Tanner Freeman (lead videographer), Rich Albert, Drew Holmes, Chip Pfleegor,
Roger Reinicker, Aaron Wernhoff, Sophia Wolff and Deanna Sparling

COMMUNION STEWARDS

Dan Weintraub and Jenn Barrington

CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRIES STAFF

Kathleen Kennan, Director of Christian Education and Youth Ministry
Sydney Walker, Associate Director of Youth Ministry
Stephanie Burris-White, Director of Preschool Ministries, and Beatrice Taylor, Nursery

SUPPORT STAFF

Susan Alexander, Reception Area Supervisor
Mary Clark, Administrative Assistant
Paul Crothamel, Director of Facilities and Security
Colleen Falasco, Director of Financial Operations
Doug Gerds, Manager of Accounting and Reporting
Nicole Hughes, Director of Marketing and Communications
Cathy Lang, Administrative Assistant
Robert King; Daniel Steele; Joan Truitt; John Young, Sextons

SESSION

Taryn Albert, Adam Blackford, Michelle Butler, Clark Collins, Bob Cox, Sara Dubberly, Rob Gooderham,
Laura Holmes, Dick Jolly, Carla Krupanski, KC Morrison, Dave McBride,
Susan McPheeters, Jan Patrick, Chip Pfleegor, Todd Piercy, Carrie Saathoff, Laura Scanlan,
Kent Smith, Janet Steinwedel, Karissa Thacker, Gill Timon, Dan Weintraub

BOARD OF DEACONS

Liz Bacon, Lisa Bianchi, Jennifer Blackford, Heather Brooks, Russ Butler, Kyle Carrick,
Beatty Chadwick, Diane Chandler, Jack Coleman, Joe Daley, Tammy Daley, Kendra Gallagher,
Sara Gavenonis, Jamie Hickey, Drew Holmes, Barbara Jobe, Sheran Kegerise, Elaine Lunardi,
Sarah Mentzer, Robert Moore, Gathoni Murugi-Jenkins, Dan McAllister, Debbie McCullough, Lynne Perkins,
Emily Pfaff, Paula Piercy, Rachel Psaros, Patti Ridout, Robin Rosser, Evie Saathoff, Carol Tatnall,
Lois Underhill, Ginger Ward, Sandie Reinicker, Sue Weissinger, Sandra Wermus, Kathy Wissner

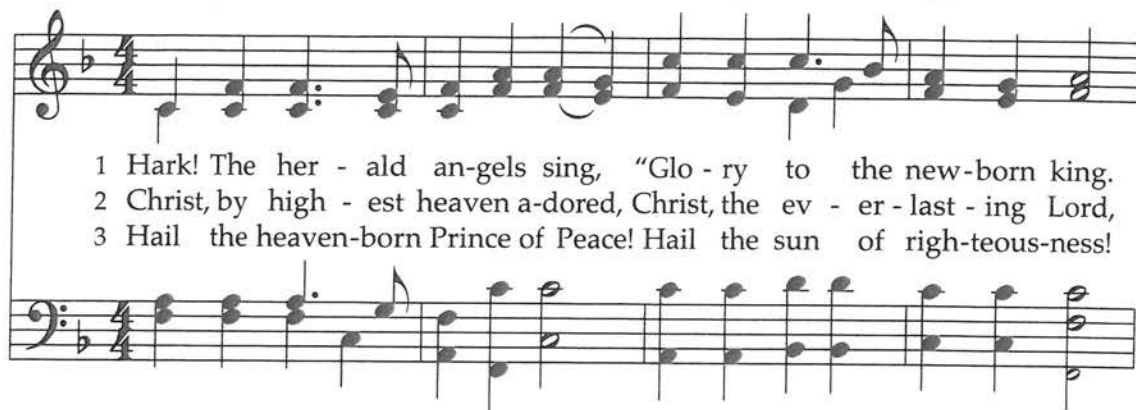
TRUSTEES

Rich Albert, Tom Brooks, Nancy Fleming, John Gavenonis, Lou Hering,
Bobbe Hoy, Brock Jobe, Sue Linderman, Robert Love, Tom Preston, Kris Qualls, Stan Stevenson

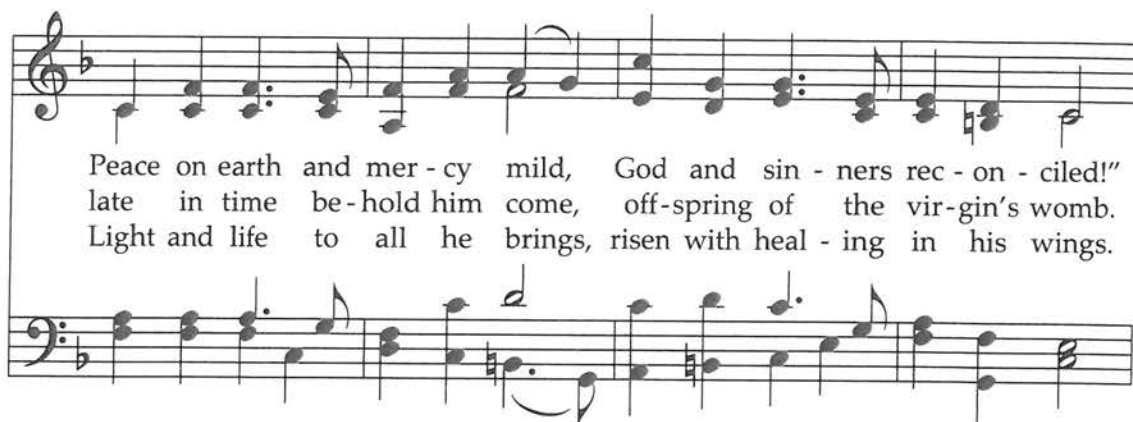
PARTNERS IN WORLDWIDE MINISTRY

DR Congo – PC(USA) Mission Co-workers: Jeff and Christi Boyd, Larry and Inge Sthreshley;
Kananga Presbytery and Members of Kamulumba-Ditalala Parish Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon
Fellowship of Middle East Evangelical Churches, Israel/Palestine – Peace Drums Steel Band
Guatemala - CEDEPCA, AJPU, the Association of Mam Christian Women for Development,
PC(USA) Mission Co-workers Betsey and Eric Moe

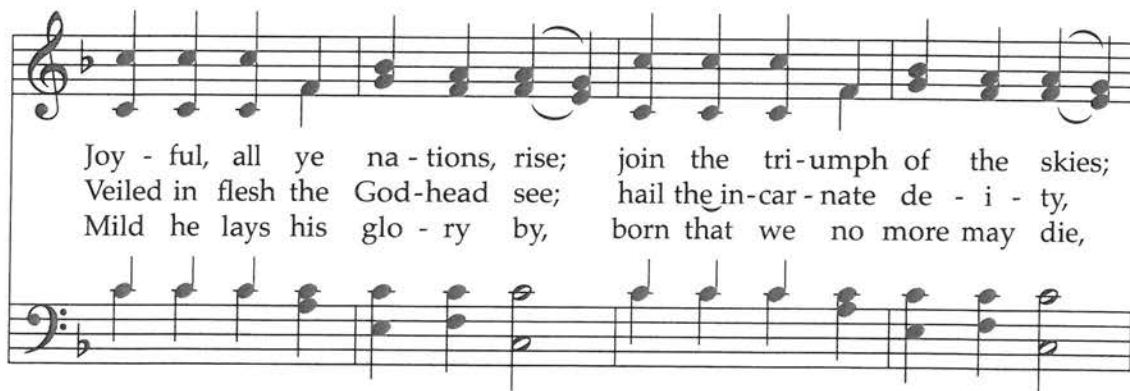
119 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing



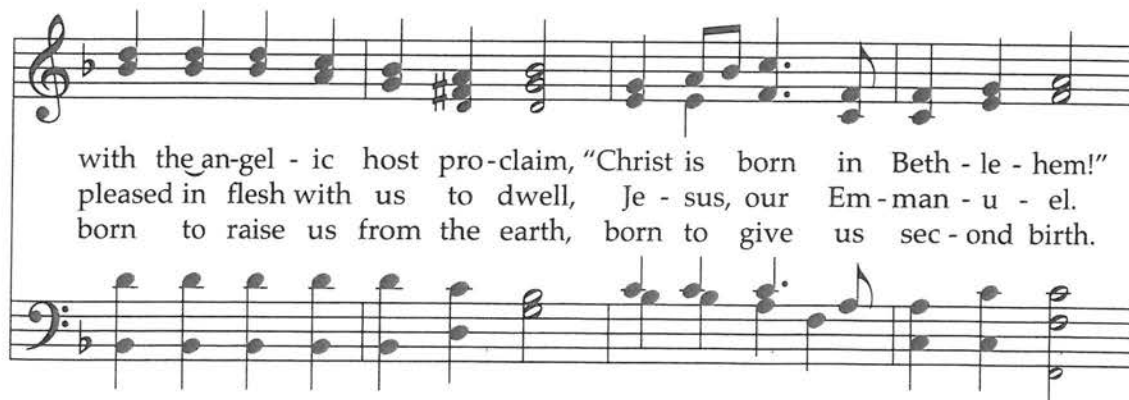
1 Hark! The her - ald an-gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king.
 2 Christ, by high - est heaven a-dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
 3 Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of righ-teous-ness!



Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"
 late in time be-hold him come, off-spring of the vir-gin's womb.
 Light and life to all he brings, risen with heal - ing in his wings.



Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise; join the tri-umph of the skies;
 Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail the in-car - nate de - i - ty,
 Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,



with the an-gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
 pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em-man - u - el.
 born to raise us from the earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.

Brought together in the mid-19th century, the text and tune of this familiar carol began in quite different forms. The text had ten stanzas and began, "Hark, how all the welkin rings." The tune was created for a festival celebrating Gutenberg's introduction of moveable type.

JESUS CHRIST: BIRTH

Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king!"

The image shows a musical score for the hymn "Hark! The herald angels sing." It consists of two staves, a treble staff on top and a bass staff on the bottom. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The melody is written in the treble staff, and the accompaniment is in the bass staff. The lyrics are written below the treble staff. The music is in a simple, hymn-like style with a clear melody and a supporting bass line.

Of the Father's Love Begotten 108



1 Of the Fa-ther's love be - got - ten, ere the worlds be - gan
 2 By his Word was all cre - at - ed; he com-mand-ed; it
 3 O, that birth for - ev - er bless - ed when the Vir - gin, full
 4 This is he whom seers in old time chant-ed of with one
 5 O ye heights of heaven, a - dore him. An - gel hosts, his prais -
 6 Christ, to thee with God the Fa - ther, and, O Ho - ly Ghost,



to be, he is Al - pha and O - me - ga; he the
 was done: heaven and earth and depths of o - cean, u - ni -
 of grace, by the Ho - ly Ghost con - ceiv - ing, bore the
 ac - cord, whom the voic - es of the proph - ets prom-ised
 es sing. Powers, do - min - ions, bow be - fore him, and ex -
 to thee, hymn and chant and high thanks-giv - ing and un -



source, the end - ing he, of the things that are, that
 verse of three in one, all that sees the moon's soft
 Sav - ior of our race, and the babe, the world's Re -
 in their faith - ful word. Now he shines, the long - ex -
 tol our God and King. Let no tongue on earth be
 wea - ried prais - es be. Hon - or, glo - ry, and do -



have been, and that fu - ture years shall see,
 shin - ing, all that breathes be - neath the sun,
 deem - er, first re - vealed his sa - cred face,
 pect - ed. Let cre - a - tion praise its Lord,
 si - lent; ev - ery voice in con - cert ring,
 min - ion, and e - ter - nal vic - to - ry,



ev - er - more and ev - er - more! A - men.

Seldom has the wonder of the Incarnation been expressed so beautifully as in this text, created in the era when the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds were being codified and mindful of similar theological affirmations. It is set here to a plainchant melody from the late Middle Ages.

What Star Is This, with Beams So Bright 152

Capo 2: (C) (Am) (G) (C) (F) (C) (G) (C) (F)
D Bm A D G D A D G

1 What star is this, with beams so bright, more
2 'Tis now ful - filled what God de - creed, "From
3 While out - ward signs the star dis - plays, an
4 O Je - sus, while the star of grace im -

(C) (G) (C) (F) (C) (G)
D A D G D A

love - ly than the noon - day light? 'Tis
Ja - cob shall a star pro - ceed"; and
in - ward light the Lord con - veys and
pels us on to seek your face, let

(Am) (D7) (G) (C) (F) (C) (Dm)
Bm E7 A D G D Em

sent to an - nounce a new - born king, glad
lo! the east - ern sa - ges stand to
urg - es them, with ten - der might, to
not our sloth - ful hearts re - fuse the

(G) (C) (G) (C) (F) (G) (C)
A D A D G A D

ti - dings of our God to bring.
read in heaven the Lord's com - mand.
seek the giv - er of the light.
guid - ance of your light to use.

This 18th-century Latin text calls attention to three kinds of light: the light of the star leading the Magi to the Christ-child, the inward light inspiring their journey, and Christ who is the Light of the world. The simple unison melody unites everything in a gentle arc.