



WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Third Sunday of Advent

December 15, 2024



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

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

9:30 – 10:30 a.m. **Worship** in the Sanctuary

Time with Our Children (approximately 9:45 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 fifth grade may be escorted to Children's Programming or they are welcome to remain in worship.

Children's Programming (9:45 – 10:30 a.m.)

- Preschool Sunday School: Ages 3 and 4 in the Preschool Suite Classroom C
- Joyful Noise Choir: Kindergarten through Grade 5 in the Youth Music Room and the Adult Music Room

10:40 – 11:30 a.m. **Adult Education** (see page 6)

Holy Toast Café – Join us for complimentary coffee, tea, treats and time with new and old friends in Rodney Chapel.

Children and Youth Programming

- Nursery Care: Age 4 and under in Preschool Suite D

Living Nativity Rehearsal in Classroom 1 and on Church lawn

11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. **Christmas Caroling** (see page 8)

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

STAY CONNECTED WITH OUR COMMUNITY OF FAITH!

 **Subscribe:** wpc.org

 **Like Us:** [@wpcdelaware](https://www.facebook.com/wpcdelaware)

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The Music: The 12-member Westminster Handbell Choir rings five octaves of cast bronze bells and three octaves of handchimes in worship today! The group has been rehearsing this music since October. Handbell choir rehearsals will resume in February. For more information or to participate, contact TonyThurman@wpc.org.

Westminster Handbell Choir
Dave Brinkley, Charles Donaghy,
Jill Getty, Kathleen Kennan,
Kelly McCullough, Tim Ohmart,
Wendy Ingersoll Perry, Kristine Qualls,
Dick Prugh, Susan Rippin,
Beth Singewald, Susan Spilecki

The flowers are given to the Glory of God and to recognize what would have been the 100th birthday of Estelle Anderson Sherman, mother of Kristine Sherman Qualls, on December 12. 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

Sara Gavenonis

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS (Please sign and pass the friendship pads.)

Gregory Knox Jones

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

PRELUDE

Carols of the Nativity

Mary Kay Parrish

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Margo and Gary Ramage,
Jessica Ramage Fischer and Matt Fischer

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.

The world says, "Worry,"

but we say, "Rejoice!"

The news media says, "Fear,"

but we say, "Rejoice!"

As we light our third advent candle,

we pray for hope, peace, and joy.

Come now, O child of Mary.

Come now, O Prince of Joy.

*HYMN NO. 93

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates
(Hymnals are located beneath the pew in front of you.)

TRURO

ADVENT PRAYER

Randall T. Clayton

**Loving God, we open ourselves to you,
trusting that you will guide us to joy-filled lives.**

Show us the creative power of hope.

Teach us the peace that comes from justice.

Fill us with the kind of joy that cannot be contained, but must be shared.

**Prepare our lives to be transformed,
so that we may walk in the light of Christ. Amen.**

TIME WITH OUR CHILDREN

(See "Today at Westminster" on page 2.)

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Luke 3:7-18

New Testament, page 52

SERMON

*HYMN NO. 96

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

WINCHESTER NEW

OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

Wild and Lone the Prophet's Voice

Joseph Parry

Wild and lone the prophet's voice
echoes through the desert still,
calling us to make a choice,
bidding us to do God's will:
"Turn from sin and be baptized;
cleanse your heart and mind and soul.
Quitting all the sins you prized,
yield your life to God's control."

"Bear the fruit repentance sows:
lives of justice, truth, and love.
Trust no other claim than those;
set your heart on things above.
Soon the Lord will come in power,
burning clean the threshing floor:
then will flames the chaff devour;
wheat alone shall fill God's store."

With such preaching stark and bold
John proclaimed salvation near,
and his timeless warnings hold
words of hope to all who hear.
So we dare to journey on,
led by faith through ways untrod,
till we come at last like John
to behold the Lamb of God.

—Carl P. Daw Jr.

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. 105

People, Look East

BESANÇON

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Away in a Manger

Hart Morris

NEW TO WESTMINSTER? Welcome. We are glad you are here. We hope that you will join us following worship in Rodney Chapel for refreshments and fellowship. There will be a member standing near the blue "Welcome Visitors" sign at the entrance of Rodney Chapel who can answer any questions you might have about Westminster. The Friendship Pad will be passed during the service. We hope you sign it and give us your email or home address so that we might welcome you with a follow-up contact. Gender-neutral, accessible restrooms are located between the pulpit transept and the tower entrance.

Please see the "I'm New" page of our website at wpc.org for more information about us.

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2024 CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

Last Chance! Deadline Extended to December 17



You are invited to make a contribution toward the beautification of our church for the Christmas season in memory of, or in honor of, loved ones. Each poinsettia is \$20. The deadline is **December 17** for memorial/honoree names to be listed in the Christmas Eve worship bulletins. For any form received *after* that date, the names will be listed in the December 29 bulletin. Please complete the poinsettia form online at bit.ly/wpc-poinsettias-2024 OR via a paper form (available on the literature table in the main hallway). PAYMENT AND FORM MUST BOTH BE RECEIVED. Please remit payment in one of two ways:

ONLINE (PREFERRED) – Go to wpc.org/donate and click the “DONATE NOW” button. If you have a login/password to our *Realm* system, please select “Sign In” to sign in to your profile first. If you do not have a login/password with our system, please select “Give Online” to make a donation as a guest. Choose “Poinsettias” from the Fund drop-down list.

CHECK – Make check payable to *Westminster Presbyterian Church* (memo: Poinsettias) and drop off at the reception desk or mail by December 15 to the church address: 1502 West 13th Street, Wilmington, DE 19806

ADULT EDUCATION

TODAY AND DECEMBER 22

The Themes of Advent

Presented by Bob Cox

10:40–11:30 a.m. | Classroom 5

Each week of Advent we light a candle and celebrate the coming of Jesus. These candles represent four themes: Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. Join Bob Cox to investigate these themes and explore ways to embrace them this Christmas.



Bob Cox has been a member of Westminster for 38 years. He's a cybersecurity architect for a major bank and enjoys studying history, especially biblical history. He and his wife Linda have a son, Josh, and a dog, Bailey.

DECEMBER 29

No Adult Education. Classes resume on January 5.
Happy New Year!

ONGOING/WEEKLY

Online Bible Studies

Midweek Manna Bible Study

Wednesdays | 12 p.m. | Zoom

Contact: Robin Rosser (rlrosser@aol.com)

Thursday Evening Bible Study

Thursdays | 6–7 p.m. | Zoom

Facilitators: Randy Williamson

(randywilliamson1@comcast.net)

and Mary Anne Peters

Peace and Justice Thursday Evening Education Event

Walking with Courage – A Special Program

With Lynne Kielhorn, Mike and Shelley Gnade

Reflections from the powerful pilgrimage to Montgomery and Selma, Alabama, in September.

December 19 | 7 p.m. | Zoom

Zoom link: bit.ly/peace-justice-zoom

Hosted by our Peace & Justice Work Group.

zoom.us/join | Meeting ID: 860 2752 1655

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](#).

ECHO Giving for Advent



Need a gift this holiday? We've got you covered! The premise of **ECHO Giving** is simple: make a contribution that meets human need while providing a holiday gift to a loved one with a lasting impact. This year's Advent **ECHO Giving** campaign focuses on the urgent needs of Westminster's various mission partners here at home and around the world. 100% of all donations go directly to the organizations you select. And we have gift cards, so you can let your loved one know that you've made a gift in his or her honor.

ECHO Giving Order Forms
are available online at
bit.ly/ECHO-Giving-Advent-2024
and can also be found at the information
table in the church's main upper-level
hallway during Advent.

WESTMINSTER STAFF (partial listing)

PASTORAL STAFF

The Rev. Dr. Gregory Knox Jones, Head of Staff
The Rev. Dr. Randall Clayton, Bridge 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
Marjorie Eldreth, Director of Music for Children and Youth
Madelyn Testa, Choral Assistant for Children and Youth

CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRIES

Kathleen Kennan, Director of Christian Education and Youth
Stephanie Burris-White, Director of Preschool Ministries
Ava Herring and Beatrice Taylor, Nursery Caregivers

VIDEOGRAPHERS

Deanna Sparling (lead videographer), Rich Albert, Chip Pfleeger,
Roger Reinicker, Aaron Wemhoff, Sophia Wolff

DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

Colleen Falasco

DIRECTOR OF FACILITIES AND SECURITY

Paul Crothamel

Visit wpc.org/staff-leadership for a full listing of Westminster's staff and leadership.

CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS AT WESTMINSTER

CHRISTMAS CAROLING

TODAY (December 15) • 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. • Walton Community Hall

Team up with the Westminster Choir and our Deacons to share the joy of Christmas at four local retirement communities. Four teams of carolers will be supported by a quartet of singers from the choir, a pianist, Deacons, and children/youth choir members. All ages are invited! We will gather for a light lunch at 11:30 a.m. in Walton Community Hall, followed by a 30-minute rehearsal and departure to each caroling site at 12:30 p.m.

THE LONGEST NIGHT: A SERVICE OF HEALING AND WHOLENESS

Wednesday, December 18 • 6 p.m. • Rodney Chapel

The holidays can bring fresh waves of grief and magnify disappointments or unfulfilled hopes in our lives. This contemplative service offers a space for both heartache and hope while we wait in darkness for the Light of the World. As we approach the longest night of the year, we invite you to this candlelight service of healing and wholeness, with stirring music by the Westminster Choir.

ENCHANTING OUTDOOR LIVING NATIVITY!

Friday, December 20 • 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. • Church Lawn

New this year, this heartwarming evening on Westminster's front lawn will feature a reading of the Christmas story, carols, a petting zoo, a brass ensemble, hot chocolate, cookies, and more. Bring your family and friends to experience the meaning of Christmas. The Christmas story begins at 5:45 p.m.; the petting zoo begins at 6:15 p.m.

CHRISTMAS HANDBELL CONCERT: *A Little Bit of Christmas**

Saturday, December 21 • 4 p.m. • Sanctuary

Experience the joy and wonder of the season with the Wilmington Handbell Ensemble performing holiday favorites under the direction of Kerry Dietz and joined by Dr. F. Anthony Thurman at the organ. A pre-concert Tower Chime recital begins at 3:30 p.m.

PIFFARO: THE RENAISSANCE BAND WITH NEW YORK POLYPHONY: *Nova! Nova!*

Sunday, December 22 • 3 p.m. • Sanctuary

The stunning singers of New York Polyphony join Piffaro in a program of English music for the Christmas season. Ethereal polyphony from the Eton Choirbook and jaunty 15th century carols will be bookended by music from the 12th and 13th centuries and two pieces by 21st century composer Andrew Smith written just for New York Polyphony.

CHRISTMAS EVE

Tuesday, December 24 • Sanctuary

Children's Pageant • 4 p.m.* – This lively service featuring a living crèche and our children's choir will be no silent night! All young children are invited to participate in the pageant. Participants gather for costumes in the Preschool Suite at 3:30.

Service of Story and Song • 5:30 p.m.* – Our storytellers will bring new life to ancient scriptures while Westminster's professional soloists, brass, and percussion will trumpet the joy of Jesus' birth! We will celebrate communion (offered to all) and sing by candlelight.

Candlelight Communion Service • 8 p.m.* – Our traditional candlelight communion (offered to all) service will include a stirring sermon by the Rev. Dr. Gregory Knox Jones and anthems by the Westminster Choir accompanied by organ, piano, and percussion.

Join us in person or online! Events with an asterisk (*) will be livestreamed/recorded at [WPC.ORG/WATCH](https://wpc.org/watch) and on Westminster's [YouTube channel](#).