

MORNING WORSHIP  
Peace On Earth

GATHERING: PREPARING TO HEAR THE WORD

In Preparation for Worship

"The Nativity story...reminds us that the Incarnation at the center of our faith unfolded among the injustice and violence of our broken and warring world. It has always taken courage to follow the Prince of Peace."  
—Jim Rice

Sharing the Life of Westminster

Rev. Jen Porter

As we prepare for worship, we are invited to be attentive to God's presence in our midst.

Opening Voluntary

"What Child Is This?"

Christopher Uehlein

Advent Candle Liturgy

Julius & Pamela Henderson

One: The heavenly host of angels praised God and sang,  
"Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace to people of good will."  
As we await the mystery of God in the flesh,  
we remember God promised a Ruler of Peace  
filled with wisdom and understanding,  
counsel and might, justice and faithfulness.  
With hope, we light the fourth Advent candle and pray:

**All: Come, Prince of Peace. Show us who we are,  
what we can be, and where we should go.**

++Response Hymn 88 "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"  
(stanza 7)

Veni Emmanuel

**O come, Desire of nations, bind  
all peoples in one heart and mind;  
bid envy, strife, and discord cease;  
fill the whole world with heaven's peace.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.**

++Passing the Peace of Christ

One: The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

Ministry of Music

"Angels We Have Heard on High" Robert Shaw, Alice Parker

Angels we have heard on high sweetly singing o'er the plains;  
And the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains.

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;  
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King.

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

See Him in a manger laid, whom the choirs of angels praise;  
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid, While our hearts in love we raise.

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Sanctuary Choir

THE WORD

Scripture

Luke 2:1-14

New Testament p. 58

One: The Word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

"Peace on Earth"

Rev. Lynette Sparks

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

++Hymn 128

"Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"

W Żłobie Leży

++Affirmation of Faith Adapted from the Confession of 1967

**Out of Israel, God in due time raised up Jesus. His faith and obedience were the response of the perfect child of God. He was the fulfillment of God's promise to Israel, the beginning of the new creation, and the pioneer of the new humanity. He gave history its meaning and direction and called the church to be his servant for the reconciliation of the world.**

Prayers of the People and 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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

Offering Our Lives

Please take a moment to sign and pass the red friendship pad located in the pew, and take note of those worshipping next to you.

Offertory

"Silent Night"

Franz Gruber (1787–1863)  
arr. John Ferguson

Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright round yon virgin mother and Child!  
Holy infant so tender and mild, sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.  
Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight; Glories stream from heaven afar,  
Heav'nly hosts sing "Alleluia! Christ, the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born."  
Silent night, holy night! Son of God love's pure light radiant beams from thy holy face  
with the dawn of redeeming grace, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.  
Silent night, holy night! Wondrous star, lend thy light, Holy light, with angels let us sing,  
Alleluias to our King! Christ, the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born.

Linda Nelson, Violin  
Sanctuary Choir

++Doxology

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;  
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost!**

++Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication

One: The Lord be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

One: Lift up your hearts.

**All: We lift them up to the Lord.**

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**All: It is right to give thanks and praise.**

**As we wait in hope for your coming again, Holy God, use all that we have and all that we are to bring light in every darkness, ease heavy burdens, and turn our endless warring into your endless peace. We pray with hope-filled anticipation. Amen.**

GOING OUT TO BE THE CHURCH

++Closing Hymn 145

"What Child Is This?"

Greensleeves

++Charge and Benediction

Closing Voluntary

"God Rest You Merry"

John Rutter (b.1945)

CONGREGATIONAL CHARGE

Go into the world in peace. Have courage. Hold on to all that is good. Return no one evil for evil. Do justice. Walk with those who are fainthearted. Help those who suffer. Honor all people. Love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Liturgies adapted from Feasting on the Word Worship Companion and Nathan Decker  
"Silent Night" used by permission under ONE LICENSE, License #724668-A.  
All rights reserved. Kyrie used by permission of the composer.

Kyrie - Unison "Lord, Have Mercy" Lee J. Afdahl

Assurance of God's Grace

One: Hear the good news! Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation. The old life has gone; a new life has begun. Know that you are forgiven and be at peace.

**All: Thanks be to God!**

AHEAD IN WORSHIP

**Christmas Eve Services**

**4:30 p.m. Intergenerational Service**

String & Vocal Ensemble

**8:00 p.m. Service of Lessons and Carols**

*Live Streamed*

Sanctuary Choir, Guest Singers

**11:00 p.m. Candlelight Communion**

Lee Copenhaver, Cello and Piano

Janet Carter, Flute

**December 31**

**Seventh Day of Christmas**

**This Gift of God**

Rev. Jen Porter

Ecclesiastes 3:1-13

Janlee Richter, Organ and Piano

**January 7**

**Epiphany of the Lord**

**Communion Sunday**

Rev. Lynette Sparks

Matthew 2:1-12

Sanctuary Choir

PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE

Preacher ..... Rev. Lynette Sparks, Senior Pastor  
 Liturgists ..... Rev. Jen Porter, Associate Pastor  
 ..... Julius & Pamela Henderson  
 ..... Larry Slager  
 ..... Nancy Greidanus, Minister for Children and their Families

Musicians..... Janlee Richter, Organ & Piano  
 ..... Sanctuary Choir, Ellen Pool, Director  
 ..... Linda Nelson, Violin

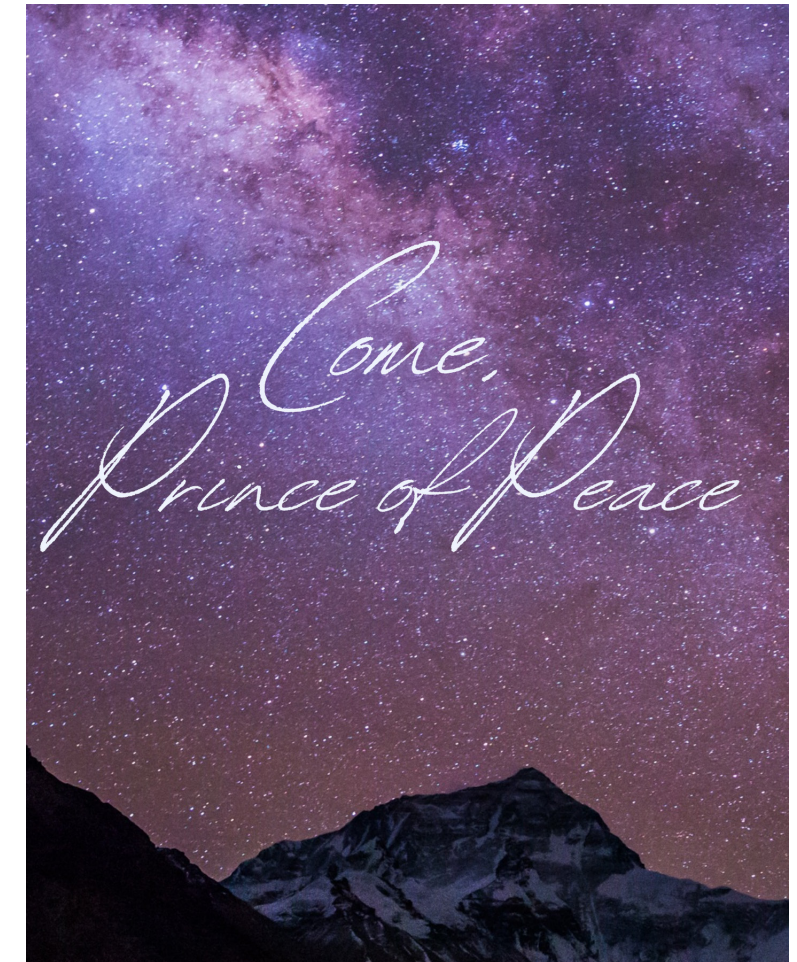
Welcome to Westminster

Thank you for joining us in worship today! If you have questions about the life of the church or becoming a member, please email Nicole Koetje at nicolek@wpcgr.org. More information about worship and updates from the church can be found at westminstergr.org. You are welcome and celebrated here!

**ACCESSIBILITY**

If you'd like a large-print bulletin please ask one of the ushers at a Sanctuary entrance. For T-loop hearing assistance, set your hearing aid to T.

We have accessible, all-gender, companion bathrooms available off of the Dining Room.



Peace on Earth

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 24, 2023  
10:00 A.M.



Matthew 25:31-46 calls all of us to actively engage in the world around us, so our faith comes alive and we wake up to new possibilities. Convicted by this passage, the Presbyterian Church (USA) decided to act boldly and compassionately to see our neighbors through Jesus' eyes and serve those who are marginalized or in need, by building congregational vitality, dismantling structural racism, and eradicating systemic poverty.

EXTENDING THE WESTMINSTER WELCOME!

As we welcome guests and visitors each week, we encourage everyone to personally extend the "Westminster Welcome" to those you have not met. Yours may be the welcome that truly helps all feel included.

# Announcements

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**CHILDREN'S SCHEDULE: December 24:** No worship centers or church school and choirs, but nursery is available for the morning service; 3:00 practice for those involved in our 4:30 Christmas Eve service, and nursery is available at the 4:30 evening service only. **December 31:** Nursery available for the morning service, but no worship centers or church school and choirs. All children's programs resume as usual on January 7.

**CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE:** Take an ornament from our Giving Tree to purchase the item pictured on the ornament. The tree and additional information can be found next to the children's check-in tables.

**GUEST SINGERS FOR CHRISTMAS EVE! December 24, 7:00 p.m.** All voices are invited to join the choir for the 8:00 p.m. Christmas Eve service! We will be meeting at 7:00 p.m. to rehearse before the service. Please RSVP to Janlee Richter at 616-808-1228.

**YOUTH UPDATE:** Kirk Singers are invited to join the Sanctuary choir in the 8:00 p.m. Christmas Eve service. Call time is 6:45 p.m. Youth group meetings will resume on January 7. There will be a parent meeting on January 7 at 9:15 a.m.

**MLK Day Volunteers: January 15, 12:00 p.m.** Join us for lunch with our Heartside neighbors on Monday, January 15 to celebrate Martin Luther King day! This is a free lunch at church from noon - 2:00 p.m., and everyone is welcome! Our hope is to get to know our neighbors a little better, to offer a welcoming space, and to enjoy a special meal together. We need volunteers to assist with set up, serving lunch, and clean up. If you can help, please contact Susan Jennings at [susanj@wpcgr.org](mailto:susanj@wpcgr.org) or Ruth Posthumus at [mpc@wpcgr.org](mailto:mpc@wpcgr.org). This lunch is hosted by the Mission Partnership committee.

**2023 Giving Update:** As of December 19, we have received \$1,310,000 in gifts and pledges. We are deeply grateful for each gift! We are nearing our budgeted goal of \$1,472,307. If you have yet to make a gift or fulfill a commitment, please give generously as you have been blessed.

**2024 Live Generously Campaign Update:** As of December 19, we have received \$1,016,823 in Giving Commitments. We are rejoicing! With unwavering hope, we look forward to meeting/exceeding our Commitment goal of \$1,280,000.

**DONATIONS:** Donations can be made by scanning the QR code, through our secure online giving site, or by check sent to the church office. Email [angiek@wpcgr.org](mailto:angiek@wpcgr.org) or call (616) 717-5533 with questions.



# This Week's Calendar

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## SUN. DECEMBER 24

10:00 a.m.	Worship Service.....	Sanctuary
11:00 a.m.	Coffee Hour .....	Gathering Place
3:00 p.m.	Children's Christmas Eve Rehearsal.....	Sanctuary
4:30 p.m.	Intergenerational Service .....	Sanctuary
7:00 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal.....	Choir Room
8:00 p.m.	Service of Lessons & Carols .....	Sanctuary
11:00 p.m.	Candlelight Communion.....	Sanctuary

## MON. DECEMBER 25

All Day Church Office Closed for Holiday

## TUES. DECEMBER 26

All Day Church Office Closed for Holiday

## THURS. DECEMBER 28

10:30 a.m.	Food Pantry .....	Front Lobby
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## SUN. DECEMBER 31

10:00 a.m.	Worship Service.....	Sanctuary
11:00 a.m.	Coffee Hour .....	Gathering Place