

MORNING WORSHIP
Called to Covenant Community

GATHERING: PREPARING TO HEAR THE WORD

In Preparation for Worship

"I imagine Lent for you and for me as a great departure from the greedy, anxious anti-neighborliness of our economy, a great departure from our exclusionary politics that fears the other, a great departure from self-indulgent consumerism that devours creation. And then an arrival in a new neighborhood, because it is a gift to be simple, it is a gift to be free; it is a gift to come down where we ought to be." —Walter Brueggemann

Sharing the Life of Westminster

Rev. Lynette Sparks

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

Opening Voluntary

"Assurance"

Robert Thurston (b. 1959)

Westminster Winds

++Call to Worship

Susan Jennings

One: The praise we come to share is praise of thanksgiving.

All: In our worship, we hold God's love close to our hearts.

One: We desire to surround ourselves with community.

All: As our songs echo, our prayers rise.

One: Together we rejoice,

All: for God is our strength.

++Hymn 166

"Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days"

St. Flavian

Prayer of Confession

God of mercy and grace, you have taught us, the church, what you would have us do and who you would have us be. Yet, we confess that we have not done what is good nor sought what is right. We have allowed injustice to grow roots in our land. We have remained silent when doctrines that run counter to the gospel of Christ are proclaimed. We are not always willing to stand against injustice and beside those who have been wronged. We have let walls of separation remain standing. Forgive us, Lord. In your love, restore us to community with you and with the world...

Silent Confession

Kyrie - Unison

"Lord, Have Mercy"

Lee J. Afdahl

Lord, have mer - cy up - on us,
Christ, have mer - cy up - on us, Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

Assurance of God's Grace

One: The Lord says, "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days. I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds. I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more." Friends, trust the good news of the gospel:

All: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Thanks be to God!

++Response Hymn 417

"Lord Jesus, Think on Me"

Southwell

(stanza 1)

Lord Jesus, think on me,
and purge away my sin.

From earth-born passions set me free,
and make me pure within.

++Passing the Peace of Christ

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

All: And also with you.

Ministry of Music

"Amazing Grace"

arr. Jay Dawson

Westminster Winds

Blessings with Younger Disciples

Nancy Greidanus

Children three years through second grade may finish their time of worship in the Worship Centers. Children's worship leaders or parents will shepherd them from the Sanctuary to their rooms. Parents may pick them up in their worship rooms following the service.

Congregation: As you worship together, may God be with you.

Children: And also with you.

Congregation: Go in peace!

THE WORD

Scripture

Genesis 9:8-17

Old Testament p. 7

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Old Testament p. 735

One: The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

"Called to Covenant Community"

Rev. Lynette Sparks

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

++Hymn 435

"There's a Wideness in God's Mercy"

In Babilone

++Affirmation of Faith *Adapted from The Confession of Belhar*

Rev. Jen Porter

One: We believe in the triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who gathers, protects, and cares for the church through Word and Spirit. This, God has done since the beginning of the world and will do to the end.

All: We believe that Christ's work of reconciliation is made manifest in the Church, as the community of believers who have been reconciled with God and with one another.

One: We believe that unity is, therefore, both a gift and an obligation for the Church of Jesus Christ.

All: We believe that, through the working of God's Spirit, it is a binding force, yet simultaneously a reality which must be earnestly pursued and sought.

One: We believe that this unity of the people of God must be manifested and be active in a variety of ways:

All: in that we love one another, and that we experience, practice, and pursue community with one another.

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 worshiping next to you.

Offertory

"Wondrous Love" arr. Alice Parker & Robert Shaw

What wondrous love is this, O my soul.

What wondrous love is this, that caused the Lord of bliss

To bear the dreadful curse for my soul.

When I was sinking down beneath God's righteous frown,

Christ laid aside His crown for my soul.

To God and to the Lamb I will sing.

To God and to the Lamb who is the great "I am."

While millions join the theme, I will sing.

And when from death I'm free I'll sing on,

And when from death I'm free, I'll sing and joyful be,

And through eternity I'll sing on.

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.

You have shown us, O God, the sacrifice that you desire. Now use these gifts—and use our lives—to liberate those who are oppressed, break the bonds of injustice, feed the hungry, welcome all in need, and unite the human family for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

GOING OUT TO BE THE CHURCH

++Closing Hymn 39

"Great Is Thy Faithfulness"

Faithfulness

++Charge and Benediction

Closing Voluntary

"Psalm XX"

Benedetto Marcello (1686-1739)

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.

AHEAD IN WORSHIP

February 25
Second Sunday in Lent
A Community of "Losers"
Rev. Lynette Sparks
Mark 8:31-38
Chapel & Sanctuary Choirs

March 3
Third Sunday in Lent
A Community of Music
Youth-Led Worship

Ahead in Adult Faith Formation

February 18-March 24: Howard Thurman's *What Makes You Come Alive*
Howard Thurman, known as the spiritual guide of the Civil Rights movement, becomes our guide through the weeks of reflection and preparation we are all called to during Lent. Using the vast collection of Thurman's teachings on spiritual maturity and spiritual discernment and drawing from Lerita Coleman Brown's book "What Makes You Come Alive," we reflect on our own spiritual lives and commitments. Join Rev. Jen for these weeks of learning, reflection, and conversation.



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 and serve those who are marginalized or in need, by building congregational vitality, dismantling structural racism, and eradicating systemic poverty.

Liturgies adapted from Call to Worship Journal and the Presbyterian Mission Agency. Bulletin Cover Art from Art in the Christian Tradition, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. "Wondrous Love" used by permission under ONE LICENSE, License #724668-A. All rights reserved. Kyrie used by permission of the composer.

PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE

Preacher..... Rev. Lynette Sparks, Senior Pastor
Liturgists Susan Jennings, Minister for Pastoral Care & Mission
..... Rev. Jen Porter, Associate Pastor

Musicians..... Ron Krebs, Organ
..... Westminster Winds, Director John Martin
..... Sanctuary Choir, Director Ellen Pool

Ushers.....Bernie Smith, Kathy Smith, Stephen Marshall
.....Marian Vanderwall, Tom DeVries, Ralph Hammond, Ben Boerkoel

Welcome to Westminster

MEMBERSHIP

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.

CHILDREN

Parents of three-year-olds to fifth graders, come to the children's check-in tables in the Gathering Place before the service to sign in. Ask an usher if you'd like special worship bags, folders, or children's bulletins to help your kids engage in worship. The nursery (babies through two-year-olds) is available during the service. Children (ages 3 through 2nd grade) will begin worship in the Sanctuary and be invited to continue worship in the interactive settings of our worship centers. Leaders will shepherd them to their centers, but parents are welcome to lead them as well. Children will wait for you at the end of the service in the Children's Ministry hallway off the Gathering Place.

YOUTH

If you would like more information about youth ministry, please contact our Minister with Youth and Young Adults Kat Jonker at katj@wpcgr.org.

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.



Reminder, Mike Moyers

**Called to Covenant
Community**

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

FEBRUARY 18, 2024
10:00 A.M.

Announcements

TOGETHER WEST MICHIGAN: February 18 and March 17, Parlor, 11:15 a.m.

Join us after the service for an informal conversation with Together West Michigan to share what is on your heart and mind.

LENT RETREAT AT CAMP HENRY: THE DARING WAY March 1 & 2 Last chance to register for our Lent retreat! Registration for the retreat closes on Friday, February 23. We are joined by trained Brené Brown Facilitators at Camp Henry for an overnight retreat. Registration, cost, and details available on our website.

DEACON MINISTRY: Can you offer a warm welcome to worshipers or provide hospitality as a coffee hour host? Please consider helping this important Deacon ministry by signing up to serve on one or more Sundays. Families can greet together, and there are no set-up or clean-up duties required for hosting coffee hour! Stop by the table in the Gathering Place after the service today to select a date, or e-mail Eric Schellenberger (elschell8@gmail.com).

CHURCH SCHOOL CHILDREN ARE RECEIVING FISH BANKS! The money collected goes to provide food and comfort for people all over the world. Bring your filled fish to place in the baskets in the worship service on Easter Sunday.

GOD & COUNTRY: February 16-22, Celebration! Cinema North *God & Country:* a look at the implications of Christian Nationalism and how it distorts not only our constitutional republic, but Christianity itself. This film, featuring prominent Christian thought leaders, is playing at Celebration! Cinema North.

ELISABETH CIRCLE: February 20, 1:00 p.m., Parlor The Elisabeth Circle will meet on February 20 at 1:00 p.m. to discuss Chapter 3 of *Signs and Wonders*.

YOUNG ADULT PUB NIGHT: February 21, 7:00 p.m., House Rules Game Lounge
Come hang out with us over drinks and games!

INTERESTED IN CLIMATE JUSTICE? For those of you that are interested in Climate Justice, First United Methodist Church is hosting a Speaker Series presented by their Climate Justice Team. Everyone is invited for the three-part series at 6:00 p.m. **February 27:** Good Sweet Earth, **March 5:** Habitat for Humanity, and **March 12:** Plainsong Farm. Learn more at wpcgr.org/other-partnerships/.

GORDON GRIFFIN'S BOOK NOW AVAILABLE: *Racism: Can We Listen, Learn, and Live Together? Our Family Story* by Westminster member Gordon Griffin is now available for purchase at Kindle Books or Amazon. Gordon takes us on a transformative journey, urging readers to grasp the complexities of how Black people came to America, unravel the historical threads that shaped their status, and comprehend the persistence of these influences.

SANDWICH BRIGADE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: A group of folks have been gathering once a month at Mel Trotter Ministries, located downtown at 225 Commerce Ave SW, to prepare sandwiches and assemble sack lunches for our neighbors. Typically the group meets the first Thursday of the month from 9:00-11:00 a.m. Contact Anita Sukenik at sandwichbrigade02@wpcgr.org for more information.

SUBMIT TO REFLECTIONS! March 1 Submissions for the Spring 2024 edition of Reflections are due March 1! Submit your entries to reflections@wpgr.org.

YOUTH UPDATE: Join us for Youth Sunday on March 3! We have rehearsals on Sunday, February 25 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., and Saturday, March 2 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

SIMPLY GIVE: December 31 - March 30 Purchase a \$10 Meijer Simply Give donation card at the Meijer on Kalamazoo and 28th Street to benefit the pantry!



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 or call (616) 717-5533 with questions.

This Week's Calendar

SUN. FEBRUARY 18

- 10:00 a.m. Worship ServiceSanctuary
- 11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour Gathering Place
- 11:15 a.m. Together West Michigan ConversationParlor
- 11:15 a.m. Adult Faith Formation..... Chapel
- 11:15 a.m. Church School & Choirs Various Locations
- 11:15 a.m. Youth Group & Choirs..... Various Locations
- 6:30 p.m. Climate Book Study..... Online

MON. FEBRUARY 19

- 11:00 a.m. Quilting GroupMultipurpose Room
- 6:00 p.m. Mission Partnerships Committee..... Library
- 6:30 p.m. Adult Faith Formation Online

TUES. FEBRUARY 20

- 1:00 p.m. Elisabeth Circle.....Parlor

WED. FEBRUARY 21

- 6:30 a.m. Youth Prayer BreakfastWolfgang's
- 5:30 p.m. NomCom Meeting Online
- 6:00 p.m. Communications Committee Conference Room
- 6:30 p.m. West Michigan Gay Men's Chorus.....Choir Room
- 7:00 p.m. Young Adult Pub Night..... House Rules

THURS. FEBRUARY 22

- 10:30 a.m. Food PantryFront Lobby
- 5:00 p.m. Men's Inner Compass Group Chapel
- 6:15 p.m. Choir Coffee/Social Time Gathering Place
- 7:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir.....Choir Room
- 7:00 p.m. Worship Committee Library

SUN. FEBRUARY 24

- 9:00 a.m. Leadership Retreat..... Dining Room

SUN. FEBRUARY 25

- 9:10 a.m. Youth Musical Rehearsal.....3rd Floor Music Room
- 9:30 a.m. Sanctuary Choir RehearsalChoir Room
- 9:30 a.m. Westminster Winds RehearsalSanctuary
- 10:00 a.m. Worship ServiceSanctuary
- 11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour Gathering Place
- 11:00 a.m. YAA Luncheon..... Conference Room
- 11:15 a.m. Adult Faith Formation Chapel
- 11:15 a.m. Church School & Choirs Various Locations
- 11:15 a.m. Youth Group & Choirs..... Various Locations
- 11:15 a.m. New Member Orientation Parlor

EASTER FLOWER DONATION



We invite you to donate an Easter flower in memory or in honor of someone special to you. These flowers will fill our Sanctuary during worship, and donors may take them home after the service on Easter. Donation: \$10.00

Order Deadline: February 28

Donated by _____

_____ In honor of _____

_____ In memory of _____

Please return form to the office, email nicolek@wpcgr.org, or through the link found on our website. Thank you!