

MORNING WORSHIP  
The Wilderness Way

GATHERING: PREPARING TO HEAR THE WORD

In preparation for "Offering Our Lives" later in the service, we invite you to fill out one of the cards in the pew rack, where you may request more information, find opportunities to connect, offer a word of praise or prayer, or give of your time and skills. You may place them in the offering plate. You are welcome to take cards home to fill out and bring them back.

In Preparation for Worship

"God walks slowly because [God] is love. If [God] is not love he would have gone much faster. Love has its speed. It is an inner speed. It is a spiritual speed. It is a different kind of speed from the technological speed to which we are accustomed. It is 'slow' yet it is lord over all other speeds since it is the speed of love." —Kosuke Koyama

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.

Introit

"Praise Him, All Ye Little Children" Carey Bonner (1859-1938)

Praise Him, praise Him, all ye little children, God is love, God is love.

Love Him, love Him, all ye little children, God is love, God is love.

Thank Him, thank Him, all ye little children, God is love, God is love.

Cherub Choir

++Call to Worship

Elder Deb Flietstra

Remember the story of our faith:

**We are the people God has delivered.**

Rejoice in the hope of our faith.

**God goes with us, step by step.**

Cling to the promise of our faith.

**Our God will not abandon us.**

In faith, let us worship God.

++Hymn 165

"The Glory of These Forty Days"

Erhalt uns, Herr

Prayer of Confession

**As Lent unfolds before us, great God, we see how far we have to go to Jerusalem. The road is long, our sins are many, and our burdens are heavy. We can't imagine new life because our current lives are filled with unwise choices and failed efforts. Meet us in our weakness.**

**Take up our sins and ease our burdens. Carry us on the way. Bring us to Jerusalem, at last. Show us a love that is stronger than death, a love no tomb can hold...**

Silent Confession

Kyrie

"Lord, Have Mercy"

Lee Afdahl

Assurance of God's Grace

Our defenses crumble in the presence of God's holiness. Our hearts are softened in the presence of Christ's mercy. The Spirit guides us as we navigate the known and the unknown. Trust the good news of the gospel: nothing in life or death, nor any power, can separate us from us the love of God.

**In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God!**

++Response Hymn "Through the Night of Doubt and Sorrow"

Ebenezer

**Through the night of doubt and sorrow  
onward goes the pilgrim band,  
singing songs of expectation,  
marching to the promised land.**

**Clear before us through the darkness  
gleams and burns the guiding light;  
pilgrim clasps the hand of pilgrim,  
stepping fearless through the night.**

++Passing the Peace of Christ

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

**And also with you.**

Ministry of Music "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" Lowell Mason (1792-1872)

arr. Gilbert Martin (b. 1941)

The text of this anthem can be found in the hymnal, hymn 223.

Sanctuary Choir

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

Luke 4:1-13

New Testament p. 61

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

"The Wilderness Way"

Rev. Lynette Sparks

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

++Hymn 684

"Faith Begins by Letting Go"

Lux Prima

++Affirmation of Faith (from A New Creed, United Church of Canada)

We are not alone, we live in God's world. We believe in God:

**who has created and is creating, who has come in Jesus,  
the Word made flesh, to reconcile and make new,  
who works in us and others by the Spirit.**

We trust in God. We are called to be the Church:

**to celebrate God's presence, to live with respect in creation,  
to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil,  
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope.**

In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us.

**We are not alone. Thanks be to God.**

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. We invite you to fill out any of the pew cards and place them in the offering plate.

Offertory "Like as the hart desireth the waterbrooks"

Herbert Howells

(1892-1983)

Like as the hart desireth the waterbrooks, so longeth my soul after thee, O God.

My soul is a-thirst for God, yea, even for the living God.

When shall I come to appear before the presence of God?

My tears have been my meat day and night, while they daily say unto me:

Where, where is now thy God?

Viviana Kloostra, Soprano

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

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

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

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

**You have shown us, O God, the sacrifice that you desire. Now use these gifts and our lives to liberate the oppressed, break the bonds of injustice, feed the hungry, welcome the poor, and unite the human family; all in service to Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

GOING OUT TO BE THE CHURCH

++Hymn 65

"Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah"

Cwm Rhondda

++Charge and Benediction

Closing Voluntary

"O God of Every Nation" setting, Edwin T. Childs (b. 1945)

Welsh tune

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.

Worship liturgies adapted from Call to Worship Journal and The Presbyterian Hymnal Online. Bulletin Image from Art in the Christian Tradition, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. Kyrie used by permission of composer. Music used by permission under ONE LICENSE, License #724668-A. All rights reserved.

Lent 2025: On the Way



*The Mind of Christ, Frank Wesley*

The Wilderness Way

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

**MARCH 9, 2025**  
**10:00 A.M.**

PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE

Preacher .....Rev. Lynette Sparks, Senior Pastor  
 Liturgists .....Rev. Jen Porter, Associate Pastor  
 .....Deb Flietstra, Clerk of Session  
 ..... Nancy Greidanus, Minister for Children & Families  
 Musicians.....Robert Ragoonanan, Minister of Music  
 ..... Janlee Richter, Music Ministry Associate  
 ..... Viviana Kloostra, Soprano  
 .....Lindsey Hoekstra, Cherub Choir Director  
 .....Cherub Choir  
 ..... Sanctuary Choir  
 Ushers..... Doug & Joanie Dowling, Keith Combs, Kari & Chris Fuller  
 .....Ann & Jim Jarvis, Rich Zimmerman, Sharon VanderWilp  
 AV Team .....Rachel Kamstra, Ricky Rivard, Stella Sheckler

Welcome to Westminster

**MEMBERSHIP**

If you have questions about the life of the church or becoming a member, please email Crystal Hovey at [crystalh@wpcgr.org](mailto:crystalh@wpcgr.org). More information about worship and updates from the church can be found at [westminstergr.org](http://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 & YOUNG ADULTS**

For more information about youth or young adult ministry, please contact our Minister with Youth and Young Adults Kat Hand at [kath@wpcgr.org](mailto:kath@wpcgr.org).

AHEAD IN WORSHIP

**March 16**  
**Second Sunday in Lent**  
**The Way of Service**  
Luke 10:25-37  
Children's Musical: "Unselfie"

**March 23**  
**Third Sunday in Lent**  
**The Just Way**  
Rev. Lynette Sparks  
Luke 13:1-9  
Sanctuary Choir & Bell Choir

Ahead in Adult Faith Formation:  
Life 360: In Community & For Community

**Discerning our Spiritual Identity and Call: March 9, Chapel following worship** We turn from our communal stories of discernment to Lent reflection, examining our spiritual lives from many different perspectives.

**This week with Rev. Jen:** The "work" of Lent: My Story and Our Story

**Next week with Ellen Shupe and Francisco Calderon:** We explore the ways families and congregations are complex combinations of cultures, backgrounds, and beliefs.



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.

YOU ARE INVITED TO WEAR A NAMETAG!

We encourage you to wear a nametag every Sunday to help us learn to know one another better and extend our welcome. If you would like a reusable nametag, please email Crystal at [crystalh@wpcgr.org](mailto:crystalh@wpcgr.org).