

WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
First Sunday of Lent
18 February 2024 + 10:00 a.m.

Welcome and Announcements

Voluntary

Prélude

Louis Vierne

***Ringing of the Bell**

The congregation rises at the ringing of the Tower Bell.

***Call to Worship**

Leader:

The season of Lent sets us on a journey.

People:

The journey begins in the wilderness.

Leader:

We follow the way of Jesus,
who faced trials, trouble, temptation, and testing.

People:

Like Jesus, we are not alone.

The Holy Spirit is with us. God's word is on our lips.

Leader:

Together we affirm the God who gave us the rainbow,
a sign of God's everlasting covenant as we journey together.

People:

Thanks be to God!

***Lenten Candle Service**

As we extinguish the first Lenten candle, we remember the colors in the rainbow and Christ's journey to the cross. We reflect on the wonders of a God who has covenanted to love us through all the turnings and seasons of our lives. Let us pray:

We come to you, O God, to affirm the many promises and covenants you have made to your pilgrim people throughout history. Come to us in this season and remind us once again that you are always with us: in death and resurrection, in desert and in flood. Amen.

***Processional Hymn 315**

In the Midst of New Dimensions

New Dimensions

***Prayer of Confession** God of mercy, we begin this Lenten season in confession. Forgive us when we condone violence, participate in systems of injustice, and use power to our own advantage at the expense of others. Forgive us when we follow paths other than those you have set before us. In covenantal love, remember us, we pray, and be for us, once more and always, an ark of safety and a place of rich color and new life. Hear now our silent prayers of confession.

***Sung Response** Lord, Have Mercy Upon Us Hymnal, Back Cover

***Declaration of Pardon
and Passing of the Peace**

Leader: Friends, believe the good news.
People: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.
Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.
People: And also with you.
Leader: Let us greet one another with the sign of peace.

***Response of Praise** Gloria Patri Hymnal, Back Cover

Children's Sermon

Congregational Response Create in Me a Clean Heart *John Carter*

**Create in me a clean heart, O God;
Create in me a clean heart, O God;
Create in me a clean heart, O God;
and renew a right spirit within me.**

Students in preschool – Grade 5 will go to their Sunday school class and Grades 6-7 will go to Confirmation following the Congregational Response.

First Scripture Reading Genesis 9:8-17 Pew Bible, OT page 7

Second Scripture Reading Mark 1:9-15 Pew Bible, NT page 34-35

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.
People: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon Light and Color Rev. Dr. Blythe D. Kieffer
Text: When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth. Genesis 9:16

Anthem Thou Knowest, Lord Bob Chilcot
Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts, the secrets of our hearts; shut not thy merciful ears to our prayer; but spare us, Lord most holy, O God most mighty. O holy and merciful Savior, thou most worthy Judge eternal, suffer us not, at our last hour, for any pains of death, to fall from thee.

***Affirmation of Faith** *A Brief Statement of Faith (Part I)*

**We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God.
Jesus proclaimed the reign of God:
preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives,
teaching by word and deed and blessing the children,
healing the sick and binding up the brokenhearted,
eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners,
and calling all to repent and believe the gospel.
Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition,
Jesus was crucified, suffering the depths of human pain
and giving his life for the sins of the world.
God raised this Jesus from the dead,
vindicating his sinless life,
breaking the power of sin and evil,
delivering us from death to life eternal. Amen.**

The Church at Prayer

Choir: Surely the presence of our God is in this place,
I can feel God's mighty power and his grace.
I can hear the brush of angels' wings
I see glory on each face;
Surely the presence of our God is in this place.

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And with your spirit.**

Pastor: Let us pray.

Prayers of the People and The Lord's Prayer

The Presentation of our Gifts

*At this time all worshipers are invited to sign and pass
the Ministry of Friendship folders in the pew racks.*

Offertory

Grace

Georg Philip Telemann

*Offertory Response

Doxology

Hymnal, 606

*Prayer of Dedication

**God of the Rainbow, we are humbled to walk in your
gracious ways. Receive, we ask, these offerings, and use
them for your good purposes to color the church and all
creation with words of hope and grace. Amen.**

*Hymn 22

God of the Sparrow

Roeder

*Charge and Benediction

*Closing Response

Amen

William Smith

*Voluntary

Lord Have Mercy Upon Us

Johann Sebastian Bach

(*) The congregation is invited to stand.

SERVING THIS SUNDAY AT WESTMINSTER

- **Chancel flowers** are given in loving memory and with deep gratitude for the life of Heather Anne Huitt by Robert, Julie, Brian, and Sarah Blythe.
- **Sunday Liturgist:** Coleman Moore
- **Lenten Candle Service:** Jeanne and Peter VanGieson from Mission and Community Service
- **Acolytes:** Charlie Graham and Ned Moore
- **Greeter:** Bill Deemer
- **Music:** The Westminster Choir, Dale Rogers, organist
- **Ushers:** Sabrina Holmes (Head Usher) Greg Boutelle, Kyle Duffy, Chris Hickman, Joyce King, Camille Massey, Jim Parker, Erin Winn
- **Safety Team:** Rich Canady
- **Videographers and Sound:** Bob Fox, Krista Steller

EDUCATION AND FELLOWSHIP THIS SUNDAY AT WESTMINSTER

- **9:45 a.m. – 12 noon** **Infants, toddlers, preschoolers (Nursery)** This week's Bible Story: "God Loves Differences" (Jacob and Esau) *Caregivers: Millie McNutt, Sara Eldridge and Linda Caupert*
- **10:15 – 11:00 a.m.**
 - **Sunday School Children in Kindergarten – Grade 2 (Third Floor Chapel)** will begin in worship with their families & go to Sunday school following the Congregational Response. The story is "A Rainbow Promise" (Genesis 9:8-17). *Teachers: Meleah Berkowitz, Lindsay Boutelle*
 - **Sunday School Children in Grade 3 – Grade 5 (Third Floor Tower Classroom)** will begin in worship with their families & go to Sunday school following the Congregational Response. The story is "A Rainbow Promise" (Genesis 9:8-17). *Teachers: Aaron Berkowitz, Julie Robbs*
 - **Grades 6-7 Confirmation Prep (Conference Room)** meet following the Children's Sermon for Lessons Fifteen: "King Solomon" of the Echo Curriculum. *Teachers: Mary Ray, Joe Fierstos*
- **11:15 a.m. – 12 noon**
 - **Confirmation Grade 8 (Parish Hall)** The confirmation class will join the Adult Education Forum for the series God's Gift of Sexuality and Gender.
 - **Adult Education Forum presents God's Gifts of Sexuality and Gender (Parish Hall)** The first of a two-part session will review faith-based sexuality curriculum and define the many facets of sexual and gender identity. Led by Drs. Blythe and Peter Kieffer
 - **Fair Trade Sale (West Narthex)** Stock up on Equal Exchange coffee, chocolate, tea, olive oil, nuts, to support just, environmentally sound products and small producers.
- **1:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. The National Federation of Music Clubs, Inc. Piano Festival (Church-wide)** Westminster has hosted this festival for many years.
- **5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. Youth Group (Parish Hall)** will meet to enjoy Bible study, games, and dinner. A meal prepared by Beth and Tadd Allen will be served.

WI-FI Hearing Assistance System is available in our Sanctuary. A basket is located at each Sanctuary entrance with instructions to install the app for those with Bluetooth enabled hearing aids, lanyards, and hearing amplifier packets for those with regular hearing aids, hearing amplifier packets and disposable earbuds for those without hearing aids. Please return the lanyards and hearing amplifier packets at the end of worship. For assistance, ask an usher.

The Library Committee has prepared a cart of books for checkout from both of our libraries in the West Narthex. Books have been selected that focus on Women's History Month as well as Easter. Please plan to stop and peruse the books and resources.

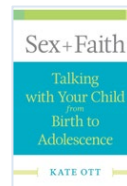
ANNOUNCEMENTS

WE WELCOME VISITORS! Information about who we are is in our Welcome Brochure located in the pew pockets and on our website www.wpcspi.org. Please complete the Ministry of Friendship folder located on the end of each pew. If you are interested in joining, please speak to a pastor.

WE WELCOME Coleman Moore as our liturgist today while Rev, Choi is away for rest and relaxation. Mr. Moore is a former ordained minister within the Christian Reformed Church.

THANK YOU to all who donated to the Souper Bowl of Caring last Sunday. \$1,370 was collected for local food pantries. This is a program organized by the youth of the PC(USA).

ADULT EDUCATION FORUM: GOD'S GIFTS OF SEXUALITY AND GENDER meets **today and February 25** at 11:15 a.m. in Parish Hall. Join the Kieffers who will review faith-based sexuality curriculum, define the many facets of sexual and gender identity, and provide a brief history of PC(USA)'s evolving and enlightened understanding of sexuality. Blythe and Peter (who is a pediatrician) taught human sexuality courses at Webster Groves Presbyterian Church during her tenure as Associate Pastor.



STEADFAST NEIGHBOR OPPORTUNITY is available the weeks of February 19, 26, March 4, 11 and 18. Join us in the renovation work of 518 S. Glenwood in preparation for its sale. We begin with removing wallpaper and painting. Dates and times are available at SignUpGenius found on the church website home page.

CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM GATHERING on **Wednesday, February 21 4:30 – 6:00 p.m.** at Grace United Methodist Church (1612 E. Capitol Avenue). Children and youth (K- Grade 12) are invited as we gather with our friends from other faith communities to explore “Serving our Community.” Parents and children are welcome to drive directly there. If transportation is needed, please email Meleah at berkowitz@wpcspi.org.

FAMILY MATTERS GATHERING AT SPRINGFIELD GYMNASIUM on **Saturday, February 24** from 6:30 – 7:30 p.m. Families with young children (ages birth through Grade 5) will be at the Springfield Gymnastics Center. RSVPs required. Please contact Meleah and Aaron Berkowitz (berkowitz@wpcspi.org) by today to reserve a spot for you and your children.

APOSTLES' READ LIBRARY BOOK GROUP will meet **Tuesday, February 27, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.** in the Ziegler Library for an extended meeting to discuss both Nine Black Robes: Inside the Supreme Court's Drive to the Right and Historic Consequences by Joan Biskupic and The Shack by William P. Young. New members are always welcome! Led by Dr. Aaron Berkowitz.



NEW MEMBERS CLASS meets **Sundays, March 3 and 10** at 9:00 a.m. in the Pastor's Study. Anyone who has been visiting and would like to learn more about the church, its mission, and becoming a member is invited. New members will be recognized at the 10:00 a.m. service on Sunday, March 17, following a Special Session meeting at 9:30 a.m.



NEW HARMONY SPRING RETREAT is **Thursday - Saturday, May 2-4**. Members and friends are invited to join Dr. Kieffer and Dale Rogers on a journey to New Harmony, Indiana. The retreat will begin with dinner on Thursday evening in the Paul Tillich Dining Room of the Red Geranium Restaurant and concludes at 12 noon on Saturday. The cost of the two-day retreat is \$250 per person. This includes two nights of lodging and five meals. The Christian Education Endowment is subsidizing the retreat

and scholarships are available. Reservations have been made for up to 40 participants. Applications are available in the West Narthex and on our website at www.wpcspi.org.

LENTEN JOURNEY AT WESTMINSTER

Lenten Candle Service

Westminster's Sunday worship service begins with a Lenten Candle Service woven into the Call to Worship. Rather than light a candle each Sunday as we do in Advent, a candle will be extinguished each Sunday of Lent to commemorate Christ's journey toward the cross.

Daily Lenten Devotional

Meditations from The Desert of Compassion written by Rachel M. Srubas, Pastor of Mountain Shadows Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will be emailed each Sunday of Lent, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday with follow up questions for reflections.

Lenten Giving

The **One Great Hour of Sharing** denominational offering collected during Lent provides relief to those affected by natural disasters, food to the hungry, and empowerment for the poor and oppressed. The **Lenten Coat Drive Box** is located in the West Narthex for our annual collection of new or gently used coats.

HOLY WEEK

Palm Sunday, March 24

10:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary

The Reverend Dr. Blythe D. Kieffer will preach. During the 10:00 a.m. worship service, Sunday school children and youth will lead us in the processional with palms and their One Great Hour of Sharing fish boxes. The center aisle pews will be lined with donated coats. The Westminster Children's Choir will sing and the Westminster Choir will sing "Sing For Joy" of Handel and "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross."

The Passion of Christ Art Display

March 24-31 in Parish Hall

Artwork depicting the Passion of Christ will be displayed in Parish Hall. Through the eyes of renowned artists, we will witness Christ's entry into Jerusalem and the events of Holy Week leading to His crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. Westminster's Labyrinth will be displayed in Parish Hall during Holy Week for those who would like to practice this discipline of prayer.

Maundy Thursday Communion Service, March 28

7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary

The Reverend Christian K. Choi will preach, and the Westminster Choir will sing "I Wonder Why" "See Now the Lamb of God," and "An Offering." This service will include the solemn stripping of the Chancel accompanied by the "Adagio for Strings" of Samuel Barber and the seven words of Christ.

Easter Sunday, March 31

10:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary

The Reverend Dr. Blythe D. Kieffer will preach, and the Westminster Choir will be joined by members of the Millikin Brass in Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus," "This is the Day the Lord Hath Made," "Easter Rejoicing" and other festive music for Easter Day. The Chancel will be filled with the cross of lilies, a cherished tradition at Westminster.

Easter Egg Hunt in Parish Hall follows 10:00 a.m. Worship.

WEEK AT WESTMINSTER

Monday, February 19

Church Office closed for Presidents' Day

Tuesday, February 20

- 9:30 AM Lydia Circle (Library)
- 10:30 AM Staff Meeting (Pastor's Study)
- 1:00 PM Knit 2, Purl 4 (2nd Floor Classroom)
- 3:00 PM Compass for Kids
- 5:30 PM Family Ministry (Conference Room)

Wednesday, February 21

- 10:00 AM Pastors Pray in Chancel (Library)
- 10:30 AM Worship Planning (Pastor's Study)
- 4:00 PM Depression and Bi-Polar Support Group
Conference Room
- 4:30 PM Children of Abraham (Off site)
- 5:30 PM Session (Parish Hall)

Thursday, February 22

- 11:30 AM Concordia Worship Service (Off site)
- 4:30 PM Steadfast Neighbor Mission Outreach Team
(2nd Floor Classroom)
- 5:30 PM Dr. Kieffer's Bible Study (2nd Floor Classroom)

Friday, February 23

Saturday, February 24

- 11:00 AM Church Mice (2nd Floor Classroom)
- 6:30 PM Family Matters Gymnastics (Off site)

Sunday, February 25

- 10:00 AM Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 10:15 AM Sunday School PreK-5 (Chapel)
- 10:15 AM Confirmation for 6-7th Grade (Conference Room)
- 11:15 AM Confirmation for 8th Grade ((Parish Hall)
- 11:15 AM Adult Ed Forum (Parish Hall)

Westminster Presbyterian Church
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<http://www.wpcspi.org>

WESTMINSTER STAFF

The Rev. Dr. Blythe D. Kieffer
Pastor and Head of Staff

The Reverend Christian K. Choi
Associate Pastor for Parish Life

The Reverend Gerald W. Boutelle
Parish Associate

Dale T. Rogers
Director of Music and the Arts

Mary Ray
Director for Youth

Meleah and Aaron Berkowitz
Co-Directors for Children's Ministry

Katie Moore
Director for Children's Music

Millie McNutt, Erin Winn
Nursery Coordinators

Emily Rowley, Keri Tate
Cooperative Preschool Staff

Ellen Carpenter
Parish Nurse

Pat Hymans
Hospitality Coordinator

Lisa Runkle
Financial Administrator

Jennie Alt
Church Administrative Assistant

Krista Steller
Communications Coordinator

Gary Warnick
Building and Property Manager

**Peter Bysko, James Capler,
Terry Gietl**
Part-time Custodians