

Westminster Messenger



December 2021 Merry Christmas! Next year...

During the middle ages there arose a tradition in Jewish communities to end their Seder meal by saying or singing, “Next year in Jerusalem.” These words were a reminder for a people without a homeland to allow them to dream and imagine that maybe next year all their hopes would be fulfilled. Next year, the idea goes, they wouldn’t have to celebrate this meal on the road, but how it was intended, in the place they know they belong.

Interestingly enough, even after the state of Israel was established and all Jews could theoretically go to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover, this phrase has still stuck. Only now, for many, it speaks of longing in a different way. Not just to be in Jerusalem, but for God to finally come, and for everything in our world to be put right. Now this phrase mostly means something like, ‘we are still waiting for our hopes to be realized. And who knows, maybe this time next year all will be well?’

This phrase is a great one for us to borrow this Advent. Not only does it speak to the normal theme of this season – longing, preparing, and restoration – but also because this particular year we cannot be in the places where our celebrations belong. No visit to grandma and grandpas, no holiday concerts, and no Christmas Eve standing shoulder to shoulder imagining a better world and singing those familiar carols.

Of course, just like the people who still celebrated the Seder all the while longing for it be different, we too will do our best to make the most of the time we have with the challenges we face. We won’t have Cocoa and Carols, but we do invite you join Patrick on Dec. 6th for a Christmas Sing Along & Story Hour. We won’t have the Cantata, but Neal and Kristin will bless us with their voices. We won’t be able to feed the camels this year, but we can still have a drive-by Nativity. And we may not be able to have our pageant, candles, and service in the Sanctuary, but we will have a Christmas Eve packages for you all to pick up and a video to watch that will help you worship on that holy night in your own home.

And so we will celebrate, even if it may not be everything want it to be. We’ll say, ‘Merry Christmas!’ and even while we say it, we will feel our hearts lament and long for more. Maybe this year our standard greeting will need to borrow the asterisk of ‘next year in Jerusalem’ from our Jewish friends. ‘Merry Christmas....but next year, at grandmas.’ ‘Merry Christmas...but next year, back in the school gymnasium.’ ‘Merry Christmas...but next year, at Westminster.’

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Dan

Nov. 29, Isaiah 64:1-9 Longing
Dec. 2, Isaiah 40:1-11 Preparing
Dec. 13, Isaiah 61:1-11 Restoration
Dec. 20, Luke 1:26-38 Surprise (Cantata)

Christmas Eve and Gift Boxes

It is with deep sadness that Session has decided that the Christmas Eve Service will be online only this year. The video will be available on the website on December 24.



To help you worship in your own home we are creating worship boxes. Please sign up online so we can make one up for the size of your family. They will be available for pick up starting on December 13 at our Live Nativity. If you NEED to have your box delivered, please call the office and let us know. **Reserve at wpcw.org/christmas no later than end of day Thursday, December 11.**



From the Heart

The **From the Heart** project involves buying Christmas gifts for CINA Children (Children in Need of Assistance). These children are generally in foster care after being removed from their homes because of abuse or neglect.

In the past we have asked you to purchase gifts for these kids. This year, we are asking if you would donate \$25 and we will purchase one Scrip gift card for each child. You can certainly provide for more than one child if you wish. There are 53 kids we will give a gift card to thru their CASA representative.

Donations can be mailed to Becky Dietz at the church office, or paid online at wpcw.org/heart. Please make your **donation by December 11.**

The children as well as the adults who support them are very appreciative of our generous and caring support.

G-Love Tree

In keeping with Westminster tradition to provide new THICK and WARM gloves and mittens to our area elementary schools, we will have a lit and festive tree outside the front doors where you can place your gifts.



The tree will be up **December 1 thru December 16.**



Christmas Sing Along & Story Hour

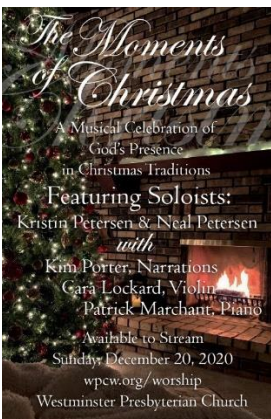
Join us on **Sunday, December 6** at 6pm on Facebook Live as we gather around a warm fire to sing our favorite carols and hear the classic 'Twas the Night Before Christmas.

We will greatly miss gathering in person for Cocoa & Carols this year but hope to keep Christmas cheer alive as we can socialize in the comments and sing together! If you do not already follow us on facebook, you can find us here: [wpcw.org/facebook](https://www.facebook.com/wpcw.org/facebook)

Live Nativity

On **Sunday, December 13** we are excited to share that we will have a DRIVE THRU Live Nativity. This fun event will take place in the front lot from **1 - 4pm**, and will be filled with lots of joyous Christmas music, live animals and nativity scene! Feel free to dress festively or decorate your car!

Share the joy of the Christmas Season with us as we navigate through a time when we cannot be together.



The Moments of Christmas

Join us online for this musical celebration of God's presence in our Christmas Traditions.

This year's musical offering will feature Neal & Kristin Petersen, Soloists; Kim Porter, Narrator; Cara Lockard, Violin; and Patrick Marchant, Piano.

The video will be available to stream beginning **Sunday, December 20** at [wpcw.org/worship](https://www.wpcw.org/worship)

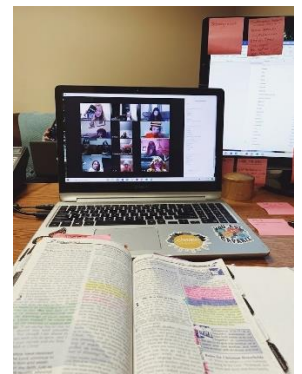
Please note that we will also have a separate, brief worship video for you to view this day.

Christmas Day Dinner

The Mission Committee is still working out the details on whether we will be able to hold this event.

Wes Pres Youth

The youth has had quite the month as we moved back online for our Wednesday evening programming. We were sad to say goodbye to our meetings at the church but we have had the greatest time being together online. Through November we talked a lot about our realities and the frustrations of staying at home once again but also shared stories and thoughts of how grateful we are to have other opportunities to bring us together regardless. We have enjoyed playing games and learning more about each other's homes through our zoom hangouts and are excited to continue learning more about who Jesus is in the midst of that.





We are so excited to announce that we will NOT let the quarantined Christmas keep us from our fun youth events. We will be hosting a cookie competition game night on December 12 at 7:00 pm and would love for your student(s) and their friends to join us! Our Wes Pres Youth leaders will be delivering sugar cookies and all that your student will need to decorate them, to their homes. They will then join them via zoom for the official Christmas showdown. It will be a night your student(s) will not want to

miss so if they are interested in joining in on the fun, please have them sign up by contacting Erica Rissi at erica@wpcw.org anytime before December 9 to get on the cookie list!

Wednesday Worship is BACK on December 23 at 6:00 pm. Wes Pres Youth will be premiering an awesome worship service for children, youth, and their families including music, a Christmas story, a lesson, and stories from the Bible! This will be a great night for you and your kids/youth to learn more about Jesus' birth and celebrate together some of our youth's participation! Mark it down on your calendars and get ready for a night of worship, all are welcome!

Erica Rissi - Jr. & Sr. High Youth Director

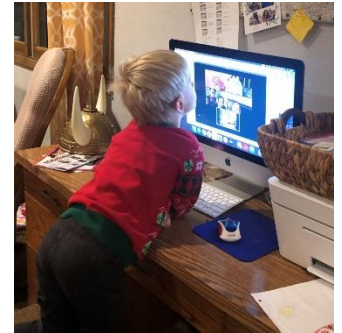
Wes Pres Wednesday December Online Schedule:

All ages will have online classes only:

- 3yrs olds – kindergarten from 5:30 - 6pm
- 1st - 2nd grade from 6 - 6:30
- 3rd - 5th grade from 6:30 – 7pm

Youth will also be meeting online.

Dates are: Dec. 2, 9 and 16.



Music Ministry

Silent Night Multi-Generational Virtual Choir

If you would like to participate in an all generations & singing levels virtual choir of *Silent Night*, please email patrick@wpcw.org This virtual choir is open to anyone who would like to participate, young and old, tall and small, as we join in singing a candle lit *Silent Night*. Multiple options will be available for recording- Children's choir,

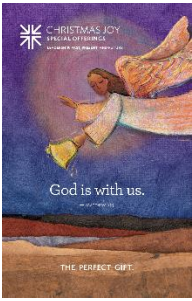
melody only recordings, and SATB parts for those who would like to sing harmonies. Video submissions will be **due Monday, December 21 at 8am.**

Worship Live Stream

Join us Sunday mornings from the comfort of your own couch! You can watch Sunday's worship service with us live, or any time after by visiting wpcw.org/YouTube. Our worship services are also saved to the Worship tab on our website.

Patrick Marchant





Christmas Joy Offering

By giving to the Christmas Joy Offering, you honor God's gift of Jesus Christ by providing assistance to current and retired church workers in their time of need and developing our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. During this time of not meeting in person, we ask if you wish to make a donation to mail a check to Becky Dietz at the church adding CHRISTMAS JOY to the MEMO line, donate by going to wpcw.org/joy or go to presbyterianmission.org to give directly.

\$7k Blessing

The Mission Committee is pleased to announce that the \$7,000 gift was awarded to Kaden's Kloset.

Kaden's Kloset focuses on providing "support to foster, adoptive and active military families" but is also "willing to help any family who may need assistance. The Kloset offers everything from clothes, to diapers, to toys, to beds, and much more." Donations of gently used clothing, toys and equipment are accepted. It is a non-profit, housed in a local church (Trinity American Lutheran Church), and is run by one volunteer. The program was started 5 years ago and has sites in 8 communities in Iowa. Locally a special Christmas Wonderland is hosted to help families, and especially the children, have a better Christmas. In addition, Kaden's Kloset provides first night bags for foster children. These consist of a backpack filled with immediate necessities for children, such as toothbrush/toothpaste, pajamas, underwear and socks, a book or toy, and a blanket or stuffed animal.

From the Finance Committee

BUDGET SUMMARY

	OCTOBER	OCTOBER	YTD	YTD	BUDGET
	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 40,043.23	\$ 79,544.65	\$ 537,722.29	\$ 607,107.64	\$ 775,505.00
ADMINISTRATION	\$ 4,246.97	\$ 4,373.43	\$ 27,259.66	\$ 29,113.37	\$ 35,700.00
OPER & MAINT	\$ 6,785.64	\$ 6,484.74	\$ 59,501.92	\$ 74,388.26	\$ 94,750.00
CHRISTIAN ED	\$ 271.77	\$ 695.41	\$ 6,067.42	\$ 15,764.20	\$ 24,100.00
PERSONNEL	\$ 32,202.62	\$ 43,624.02	\$ 384,541.44	\$ 414,364.30	\$ 511,221.00
MISSION	\$ 5,195.52	\$ 157.03	\$ 51,463.05	\$ 53,608.25	\$ 63,000.00
MUSIC & WORSHIP	\$ 679.18	\$ 564.25	\$ 10,852.86	\$ 10,053.20	\$ 15,800.00
STEWARDSHIP	\$ 162.19	\$ 210.20	\$ 221.50	\$ 282.20	\$ 1,500.00
HOSPITALITY & DEACONS	\$ 188.37	\$ 442.31	\$ 1,223.53	\$ 3,704.77	\$ 5,000.00
MEMBERSHIP & OUTREACH	\$ 95.00	\$ -	\$ 1,227.54	\$ 2,048.44	\$ 5,700.00
PER CAPITA	\$ 1,561.14	\$ 1,633.68	\$ 15,611.40	\$ 16,336.80	\$ 18,734.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 51,388.40	\$ 58,185.07	\$ 557,970.32	\$ 619,663.79	\$ 775,505.00
REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	\$ (11,345.17)	\$ 21,359.58	\$ (20,248.03)	\$ (12,556.15)	

2020 Per Capita

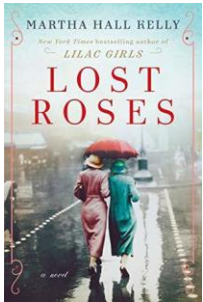
Our congregation pays an annual amount of money, per church member, to our presbytery. The per capita amount requested of Westminster is a combined total of requests from the presbytery, the synod in which our presbytery is located and the General Assembly, based upon the respective budgets of these organizations for the coming year.

For 2020 the per capita represents \$36.95 for each man, woman and child who is a confirmed member of the church. If you have not paid your per capita amount for this year, please prayerfully consider doing so as this will help reduce the need from the church's general budget.

The per capita for 2021 is \$39.00. Thank you.

Scrip

As we head into the holiday season, don't forget how quick, easy and safe it is to purchase Scrip cards for all your gift/shopping needs. Proceeds go back to Westminster with each card you buy! You can download an order form at wpcw.org or click [HERE](#). In addition to the list we also have the following cards: Panda Express (\$25), Fleet Farm (\$25 & \$100), and Barmuda (\$25 cards selling for \$20 & \$50 cards selling for \$40). Barmuda cards are usable at Roxxy's, Tap Tap, Stuffed Olive, Deringer's & VooDoo Lounge all located on Main Street in Cedar Falls. Orders can be placed with the office for any cards we do not have in stock. Please allow 8-10 days for cards to arrive.



Women's Book Club

The Westminster Women's Book Club will not be meeting on Zoom in December due to the busy holiday season. Looking ahead, the next books will be:

For **January 17, 2021**, we will be reading "Lost Roses" by Martha Hall Kelly, led by Sue Brainard.

On **February 21, 2021**, Vicki Grimes will lead the discussion for "Searching for Sylvie Lee" by Jean Kwok.

This group is open to all women! Contact Sandy Lewis if you would like to be added to the Zoom invite list. sandycnm@cfu.net or 319-504-2802.

Card Ministry Class

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, this class will not be meeting until **January 14, 2021**. Should our county still be in the red/High Alert, the next class will be announced at a later date.

Contact Bonnie Smith Davis at 230-2165, jericho1SD@ram-jet.com or Ann Northey at 269-9359, northey@hughes.net with your name, phone # and email to sign up.

Thank You

Many thanks to the congregation and staff for the prayers and cards I received concerning my recent surgery. I had a good recovery with very little pain. Thank you, Lord! Mary Jane Shafer.