

December, 2021 Messenger

Congregational Meeting

There will be a called special meeting of the congregation on Sunday, December 12, at the end of worship. The purpose of the meeting will be to elect officers and hear a brief presentation from our session/Elders Seeking Wisdom.

December Worship Schedule

Worship with us Sundays in person or online:

December 5

9:00 am Traditional

11:15 am Contemporary (Facebook Live)

Sunday School at 10:10 am

or watch later at wpcw.org/worship

**NOTE: We will have just one service at 10:00 am on December 12, 19 and 26.
There will not be Sunday School on these days.**

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services:

5:00 pm & 7:00 pm

\$7K Blessing Finalists

Below is a synopsis of each of the three community organizations the Mission Committee has selected to be considered for this year's \$7,000 Blessing. Voting will be in person at both services on Sunday, Dec. 5, with the results being announced at the single service on Sunday, December 12. For those members unable to attend on the 5th, call the church office at 234-5501 or email jodi@wpcw.org with your vote.

A special thank you to each church member who submitted a nomination form; all were worthy organizations.

Please read about the three organizations ahead of Sunday the 5th, and pray for God's leading as we vote. The Mission Committee looks forward to having the entire congregation participate in the selection of our 2021 Blessing recipient!

Mission Committee

Eye of the Needle

Eye of the Needle is an organization in Waterloo who provides assistance for those along the poverty line. They supply clothing, food, household items and transportation costs to people in need. They work to match people in need with donations for larger furniture needs as well. The goal of Eye of the Needle is to provide hope and assistance to those in need with the hope that it helps them to become self-sufficient. The Eye of the Needle would use the \$7,000 blessing to buy school uniforms for

children in need, winter coats for kids, families needing winter blankets and clothes, and provide bus tickets or gas cards for assistance for work, school, and Iowa city for health issues. Eye of the Needle is run with 1 employee and 10 volunteers.

House of Hope

House of Hope is an organization in Waterloo providing housing to homeless single moms and girls aging out of foster care. They serve 15 families and 5 girls at a time while providing outreach to those on the waiting list. House of Hope provides child care, mentoring, and access to medical care. Moms are also helped to find work and/or complete their education as well as taught life skills and given financial mentoring. House of Hope's goal is to help families secure independence and permanent housing. The \$7,000 blessing would be used by House of Hope to start a Driving Hope service with Veridian Credit Union. Families unable to purchase a car will be given a low interest short term loan (18 mos.) with a monthly payment of \$200-\$250. The \$7,000 would be used for a sustainable fund in a CD to help secure the loans. House of Hope has 11 employees and 350 volunteers.

The Job Foundation

The Job Foundation is an organization in Cedar Falls who work to provide financial literacy to kids in low-income families. They work with children and provide financial incentive to kids by tying earnings to good grades, behaviors, and attendance at school. 60% of earnings must be held in savings and are able to be accessed when a student graduates high school with no criminal record. The other 40% may be spent during supervised shopping trips that provide hands on learning of budgeting, comparison shopping, balancing checkbooks, giving charitably, providing for their families, and much more. The Job Foundation also provides financial stewardship classes. The Job Foundation would use the \$7,000 blessing towards securing financial stability for children growing up in low-income households with the goal of a student having at least \$3,000 in their savings account at graduation to help launch them into independent living with the tools and knowledge to manage their funds. The Job Foundation has 14 staff members and 94 volunteers.

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.



We have already distributed hearts for the younger kids gifts and you have overwhelmingly grabbed them all up! Thank you.

Please return your wrapped gift with the heart securely taped to the top by December 6.

For the older kids, we will be giving them a \$25 gift Scrip card. We are still collecting money for this, so if you would like to help, donations can be mailed to Becky Dietz at the church office, church Kiosk or paid online at wpcw.org/heart.

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

We warmly welcome these friends who joined Westminster on November 21.



John Adams (Jolan)
1321 Olympic Dr.
Waterloo, IA 50701
319-232-1943
319-404-0866
ja@adamsevenson.com

John is a CPA for Adams Evenson & Co.



Troy & Jessica Elliott
231 Maryland Ave.
Waterloo, IA 50701
319-621-4702 Troy
funkyfro74@gmail.com
319-830-3319 Jessica
J.K.Knappek@gmail.com

Troy is in insurance sales in the state of Iowa and Jessica is a teacher to 3 year olds at Happy Time Daycare & Preschool. Their children are: Reese, Riley and William.



Carole Gustafson
209 Forest Ave.
Waterloo, IA 50702
319-215-2660
carole50702@gmail.com

Carole is a retired social worker and has 2 adult children.



Teresa (Teri) Kay (William)
2653 Saratoga Dr.
Waterloo, IA 50702
319-269-3780 cell
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Teri is the owner of Merry Maids.

Let Jesus Grow!

Do you ever wonder if Joseph and Mary tried to stunt Jesus' growth? Did they insist on dressing him younger than he was? Were they overly protective, shielding his innocence? Were they 'helicopter parents' before it was a thing?

Do you suppose Mary was there every time he climbed a fig tree, telling him to be careful? Did she make him wait an hour after lunch before going swimming with the other boys in the Sea of Galilee? Do you suppose Joseph was constantly telling Jesus to be careful with the power tools? Did he stand over him every time he handled something sharp? Of course, we'll never know.

What we do know is Jesus grew up. According to Luke, he was baptized and began his public ministry at about the age of thirty. Jesus traveled across Israel preaching, feeding and healing. After three years he was crucified, buried, rose from the dead and offered eternal life to all who followed him.

Whatever else he did, Jesus did NOT stay a baby in a manger. He grew up!

And yet, many folks seem to prefer that baby in a manger. Like Will Farrell's famous 'Jesus Prayer' in the movie "Talladega Nights", they want the 'Gentle Jesus, meek and mild'. They are less interested in the adult Jesus who spoke hard words about adultery and loving our neighbor; calling out the leadership for their religious hypocrisy; and yet promising to love and guide those who were brave enough to follow him. They prefer keeping Jesus as a baby, or at least a child who, like Peter Pan and the Lost Boys, will never grow up.

But if that were the case, Jesus would never teach us about God's love, or die for us, or be raised from the dead for us, or offer us eternal life. For us and our salvation, Jesus had to grow up.

We all know that Christmas is coming. I hope you enjoy it to the max! Carols, Cocoa, Presents, Pageants: all of that. But let's not stay there, stunting Jesus' growth. Let's not treat Christmas like an emotional blackhole, sucking us down into a land of nostalgia where Jesus never matures.

Instead, let's experience Christmas as a springboard with the experience of God's love propelling us forward to the Christ who was, who is, and who will come again.

I hope to see all of you at our services this Christmas as we celebrate the infant Jesus. And I hope to see all of you next year as we embrace the life, love and ministry of the Savior he became.

God's peace to all ~ Pastor Ken.

Upcoming Events

Labyrinth Open for Advent

Join us on **December 4** to celebrate the beginning of Advent on our newly dedicated Petite Chartres labyrinth. Walk-in as individuals or families anytime between 9:00 am - 12:00 pm to its peace and serenity with beautiful meditative music and soft lights decorating the labyrinth. Simple instruction sheets and deacons will be available to instruct.

The Labyrinth will be available to anyone to stop in from 9am-12pm on Sat., January 8, Sat., February 12 and Sat., March 12. Should you wish to access the Labyrinth at a different time, contact the church office.





Cocoa & Carols

This **Sunday, December 5** we will enjoy all the wonderful sounds of Christmas music from our children and adult choirs.

Join us at 5:00 pm in the Shared Life Center for fellowship, lots of joyous music, cookies and hot cocoa!

Bell Festival

Sunday, December 12 our wonderful adult bell choir, the Meisteringers, will be leading us in worship. Ringing joyful Christmas songs all throughout the service!



Card Making Class

All are invited to join this class that meets next on **16** from 2:00 – 4:00 pm in Room 216. Cost is \$15 for 4 kits, which include craft instruction and supplies. Bring a friend for a time of fun and fellowship. Must sign up ahead of time.

The Symbols of Christmas

On **December 19**, be sure to mark your calendars for a special service at **10:00 am**. The Chancel Choir, Messenger Choir and Church Mice will be uniting to present "The Symbols Of Christmas". This program will take the congregation through 12 Symbols that we don't usually connect as being related to the scriptural text of Christmas and presents how we should see them through the Christmas story and our lives as Christians. Please join us for this special service of songs, skits and scripture!



Live Nativity

Also on **December 19**, the Deacons will once again host a Live Nativity from **10 am - 1 pm**. This will be in the front parking lot, but this year you will be able to pet the animals and enjoy the festive atmosphere.

Free Christmas Dinner

Westminster will once again have a Christmas meal available for pick up. We will be doing a drive-through pick-up on Christmas Eve morning.

A very big THANK YOU goes to HyVee and Village Inn as they both are assisting with the meal.



How can you help? We need to purchase 50 more pumpkin pies! The cost is \$13 each. You can send in a check to Becky Dietz (noting Christmas Pie in the MEMO line), drop a check/cash off to the office, in the offering plate on Sundays, at the Kiosk or online at wpcw.org/pie.

Christian Education

Leaning into Difficult Conversations, Session 1 - Religion and Politics

Over the last couple years our country has gotten more politically divisive. That divisiveness has even spilled over into disagreements in the church - even at Westminster. One of the comments I've heard many times is to, "keep politics out of the church." This sentiment is, I hope, meant for good, perhaps coming from wanting to make sure all are welcome, but in reality, is an impossible thing to do. Our faith will always inform how we live our lives and make decisions, which will inevitably create overlap with our political points of view. Yet, the interaction between our faith and politics is full of many traps and the place of the church in that conversation can be tricky.

Join Pastors Dan and Ken in a conversation, we, as church, really need to have on the interaction of faith and politics. Together we will look at the history of how they have interacted, and also read essays from well-known politicians and faith leaders. Sundays at 10:10 am in the Chapel.

Dec. 5 – Faith Leaders on their Interaction with Politics

Sunday School

Most weeks kids and adults will be doing studies based on the texts used in worship that morning.

3yr – 1st grade: First Floor Kindergarten Rm

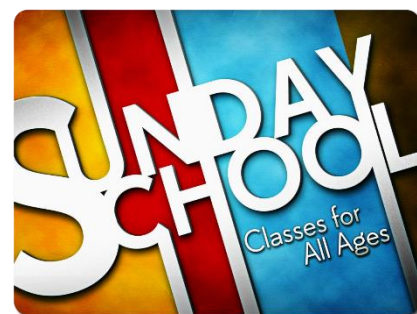
2nd- 5th grade: First Floor Rm 101

Middle School

Confirmation Class in Third Floor Jr. High Rm

HS - Adult

In the Chapel with Pastor Dan



NOTE: Sunday School December 5 only this month.

Wes Pres Youth

This last month Wes Pres Youth enjoyed our first overnight trip of the year! A number our middle school and high school students traveled to Lakeshore Center at Okoboji for our weekend work trip. Despite the cold weather our students put in work outside cleaning up the camp, gathering wood for fireplaces, and clearing gutters on cabins and houses. We also did work indoors which mainly consisted of sorting and taking inventory of what felt like a million t-shirts. Before we left the camp we

got to decorate the lodge as we danced to Christmas music! We all enjoyed the full weekend of games, working, and laughs.

Looking ahead we have a full month of festive activities. We are excited to join the congregation at Cocoa and Carols (Dec. 5) as well as the Live Nativity (Dec. 19). On December 22 we have a very special day planned for the students as we are holding our Schools Out: Gift Exchange Extravaganza Pajama Party!! As the exhaustive name implies the students will join us in celebration of winter break and Christmas by having a pajama party where we will play games and of course do our annual white elephant gift exchange.

Steven Jordan, Youth Leader



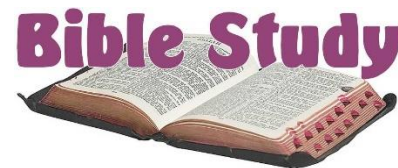
Wes Pres Wednesday Schedule	
Time	Event
5:00 - 6:00	Dinner
5:30 - 6:00	Messenger Choir (2nd - 5th)
6:00 - 7:00	Wes Pres Kids (2nd - 5th) Rotation of games, craft and story
6:00 - 6:20	Church Mice Choir (3 yr olds - 1st)
6:20 - 7:00	Wes Pres Kids (3 yr olds - 1st) Rotation of games, craft and story
6:30 - 7:00	Centering Prayer
6:00 - 7:00	Men's and Women's Adult Groups
6:30 - 7:30	Adult Choir
6:00 - 7:00	Wes Pres Youth (6th - 8th)
7:30 - 8:30	Wes Pres Sr. High (9th - 12th)
7:30 - 8:30	Meisteringers Adult Bell Choir

Women of Westminster

You are invited to join us during Wes Pres Wednesdays at 6:00 pm. Our general schedule includes 10 minutes of catching up, 35 minutes of discussion, 10 minutes of devotion, celebration and needs for prayer. Join us for a time of fellowship!

Monday Morning Bible Studies

Women's Bible Study: Meets Monday mornings at 9:00 am on Zoom only. This class is led by Cathy Young. All women are invited! If you would like to be added to the email list to Zoom in with them, send a message to cathyyoung4@gmail.com



Men's Bible Study: Meets in the Coffee House Monday's at 9:00 am. All men are invited to join this group. The Men's Bible study is discussing Bible text.

Talk to Pastor Dan if you want to learn more about joining these groups.

Finance

Finance – Monthly Recap

Westminster received \$38,340 in pledges and other revenue versus \$40,043 in 2020. Year-to-date through October, we have received support of \$459,257 which is 69% of budgeted receipts, the majority of this decrease is due to lower pledges (which was somewhat expected by the lowered budgeted pledges for this year). We have not needed to ask for any financial support from the Endowment funds so far this year, this support was budgeted for \$77,710 in 2021. However, as we look to December we anticipate needing to utilize a portion of this Endowment/Reserve support.

Total expenses paid were \$43,977 for the month versus \$51,388 last year. Year-to-date expenses were \$439,595 or 66% of budget and lower than last year's \$557,970. As you may remember year to date expenses have been lower, in part, due to several open staff positions during the year and periods of reduced programming due to Covid. The Church has filled several "transitional" positions in Music and Youth programs and those expense areas will start to be recognized going forward. However, we do anticipate some savings as a result of these targeted hires.

As a reminder, Westminster's budget for 2021 is \$665,681 which includes \$73,156 in reserves and the afore mentioned \$77,710 in endowment support. 2020 budget was \$775,505. As you can see this year's budget was reduced by over \$109,000. Committees have started the budgeting process for 2022 and are working with the Elders Seeking Wisdom Taskforce to discern a sustainable path forward for Westminster. Please continue to pray for these dedicated volunteers.

John Speas
Finance Chair

BUDGET SUMMARY						
	OCTOBER	OCTOBER	YTD	YTD	BUDGET	BUDGET
	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 38,339.52	\$ 40,043.23	\$ 459,257.12	\$ 537,722.29	\$ 665,681.00	\$ 775,505.00
ADMINISTRATION	\$ 2,478.25	\$ 4,246.97	\$ 22,674.56	\$ 27,259.66	\$ 26,200.00	\$ 35,700.00
OPER & MAINT	\$ 4,555.08	\$ 6,785.64	\$ 63,202.59	\$ 59,501.92	\$ 86,000.00	\$ 94,750.00
CHRISTIAN ED	\$ 540.18	\$ 271.77	\$ 6,983.94	\$ 6,067.42	\$ 14,550.00	\$ 24,100.00
PERSONNEL	\$ 33,333.57	\$ 32,202.62	\$ 291,455.17	\$ 384,541.44	\$ 462,125.00	\$ 511,221.00
MISSION	\$ -	\$ 5,195.52	\$ 33,643.04	\$ 51,463.05	\$ 47,000.00	\$ 63,000.00
MUSIC & WORSHIP	\$ 1,032.81	\$ 679.18	\$ 1,626.97	\$ 10,852.86	\$ 4,023.00	\$ 15,800.00
STEWARDSHIP	\$ 93.25	\$ 162.19	\$ 126.77	\$ 221.50	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,500.00
HOSPITALITY & DEACONS	\$ 278.27	\$ 188.37	\$ 2,078.40	\$ 1,223.53	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
MEMBERSHIP & OUTREACH	\$ 50.00	\$ 95.00	\$ 1,651.54	\$ 1,227.54	\$ 3,400.00	\$ 5,700.00
PER CAPITA	\$ 1,615.25	\$ 1,561.14	\$ 16,152.50	\$ 15,611.40	\$ 19,383.00	\$ 18,734.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 43,976.66	\$ 51,388.40	\$ 439,595.48	\$ 557,970.32	\$ 665,681.00	\$ 775,505.00
	\$ (5,637.14)	\$ (11,345.17)	\$ 19,661.64	\$ (20,248.03)		

Deacons



G-Love Tree

In keeping with the Deacons tradition to provide NEW THICK and WARM gloves and mittens to our area elementary schools, the tree is up in the Welcome Center where you can place your gifts through December 19.

How Can You Help?

Scrip

The Scrip tables will be open on the following Sunday's. Supporting this program supports Westminster's budget! You can also purchase cards in the church office during the week. Help give back to your church by purchasing Scrip cards before you run to the grocery store or fill up the tank. *Do not forget Scrip when doing your Christmas shopping ... it is right around the corner!*

Dec 5, Dec 12 and Dec 19

Presbyterian Pantry

The pantry is open on the 1st Saturday and the 3rd Thursday of the month. We are always needing volunteers to help pass out food on these days but we also need help pre-packing the food the day or two prior. You can call the church office at 234-5501 if you want to come in and help pack. Go to wpcw.org/volunteer to help when the pantry is open. **We currently need 3 more people to sign up for December 4 and 6 for December 16.**



In October we served 58 and 46 households.

Another way you can help is by providing items that we cannot get from the Food Bank such as paper products and personal care items. Below is a list of products needed. You can drop them off on Sunday morning in the Welcome Center or to the church office during the week!

- paper towels
- toilet paper
- Kleenex
- bar soap
- toothbrushes & toothpaste
- feminine hygiene products (tampons, pads, pantyliners)
- men's & women's disposable razors
- women's shampoo & conditioner
- men's shampoo
- kids' 3 in 1 body wash, shampoo, conditioner
- deodorant
- shaving cream
- diapers
- diaper wipes
- adult diapers

Worship In Person or Live Stream

We worship in person and online each Sunday at 9:00 am for our Traditional worship and at 11:15 for our Contemporary worship. Watch the Contemporary service at 11:15 on Facebook Live! You can also view online any time after by visiting wpcw.org/worship.

A quick look at what's coming up in January:

- Jan 8 Presbyterian Pantry, Labyrinth Walk
- Jan. 12 WPW Resumes/Carnival
- Jan. 13 Card Class
- Jan. 14-15 Youth Winter Weekend
- Jan. 16. Women's Book Club
- Jan. 20 Presbyterian Pantry
- Jan. 30 Annual Meeting



NOTE: Committee Meetings yet to be determined.

To view the church calendar, go to wpcw.org/calendar