



First Presbyterian Church

"We love because God first loved us."
• 1 John 4:19

WESTMINSTER

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1684 IOWA ST. | DUBUQUE, IA

2155 UNIVERSITY AVE | DUBUQUE, IA



December 8, 2024 | Morning Worship 9:30 am

Welcome! If you are a guest, please fill out a visitor's card in the pew rack and place it in the offering plate. We would love to greet you by name.

Nursery care is located in the basement, provided for children through age three.

Please feel free to use the pillow cushions placed above the coat racks at the back of the church if it is difficult for you to sit in our hard pews.

Prayer Requests – Each week, we encourage folks to share their joys and concerns with one another using the *Prayer Cards* in the pews. Please complete a *Prayer Card* and place it in the Offering Plate during worship. This will ensure your prayers are lifted up to God in worship and/or in private.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

MINUTE FOR MISSION

"The Christmas Joy Offering"

Annalee Ward

PRELUDE

Canon de Noel

arr. Joseph Martin

FOR PRAYER AND REFLECTION

In a world that is lonely, we will save a seat for you.

In a world that is anxious, we will light candles against the gloom.

In a world that is weary, we will sing songs of joy and truth.

For here in this place, God is weaving us together.

We are a three-cord strand, not easily broken.

OPENING PRAYER

*CANDLE LIGHTING LITURGY

Lindsey, Derrick, Kip, Harvey & August Ward

ONE: On the first Sunday of Advent, we lit the candle of hope,
a reminder of the hope we have in Jesus Christ.

A candle is lit.

ONE: In a weary and worn world, how do we begin again?
Where do we start?

ALL: Let us begin together.

Let us begin arm in arm.

Let us begin by holding each other up, instead of tearing each other down.

Let us begin with words of peace.

ONE: Yes, let us begin with peace.
Today we light the candle of peace.

A candle is lit.

**ALL: May these lights remind us of what could be.
May these lights mark a new beginning.
May peace flow like a river, and may it start with us.**

ONE: Arm in arm, hand in hand, side by side.

ALL: God is weaving us together.

ONE: May we begin again.

***SONG OF PRAISE #154** *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION & WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

I have tried to make my own way. I have tried to lace my own shoes, to build my own house, to kindle my own faith. I have said a thousand times, “*turn back*,” as if I am fine on my own. But the days are long and I am forgetful. I need your help. Can you remind me?

**We will remind you of this everlasting truth:
You are not alone. Where you go, God goes.
You are held in grace. Trust in this good news.**

Thanks be to God! I remember. I believe.

Now we need your help. We, too, have tried to make our own way. We have tried to lace our own shoes, to build our own houses, to kindle our own faiths. We have said a thousand times, “turn back,” as if we are fine on our own. But the days are long and we are forgetful. We need your help. Can you remind us?

I will remind you of this everlasting truth: You are not alone. Where you go, God goes. You are held in grace. Trust in this good news.

Thanks be to God! We remember. We believe. Alleluia! Amen.

***SUNG RESPONSE from** *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is giv'n! So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of His heav'n. No ear may hear His coming, but in this world of sin, where meek souls will receive Him still, the dear Christ enters in.

****PASSING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Please take a moment to extend the peace of Christ to one another by greeting those around you. Say “hello”, wave, learn each other’s names – whatever feels most comfortable to you.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

CHRISTMAS PLAY PRESENTING THE GOSPEL *(see insert)*

“Waiting for the Christmas Guest”

By Janet Meili, Adapted by Linda Longfield

*HYMN

Away in a Manger – all verses

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: We do not go alone.

We believe in a God with-us: a God who walks with us in the valley, dances with us on the mountaintop, sings with us through the night and rejoices in the morning. We believe that God wired us for relationship, saying to creation on the very first week, “Humans should not be alone.” Therefore, in an effort to be who God called us to be, we strive to live like the Trinity—connected, united, and centered. We believe in the power of community. We commit to learning each other’s names, and we choose to journey with each other, Carrying the gift of Christmas within and among us always. Thanks be to God, for lighting our way.

THE OFFERING

*OFFERTORY

Fum, Fum, Fum

arr. Mark Hayes

DOXOLOGY #34

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

*SENDING HYMN #159

The King of Glory Comes

*BENEDICTION

*POSTLUDE

Carols for a Tiny King

arr. Heather Sorenson

* You are invited to rise.

WE ARE GLAD YOU ARE HERE! Interested in learning more about these congregations? Wondering how to get connected on a deeper level? Thinking about what becoming a member of the church may look like? Pastor Stephanie would love to talk with you. Simply contact her at fpcdbq.pastor@gmail.com or (507) 227-8537.

The worship schedule for Dec 2024 is as follows:

- 1st/3rd/5th Sunday - WPC (Communion on 1st Sunday)
- 2nd/4th Sunday – FPC

For January/February 2025 we will worship exclusively at WPC for optimal ease and safety during the more intense cold weather season.

- **WEATHER BAD? IS CHURCH CANCELED?** If inclement weather exists, **Sunday morning worship** may be moved from FPC to WPC OR canceled. Such a decision will be made no later than 7am Sunday morning and will be posted on the WPC and FPC website and emailed to both congregations. If Sunday morning worship is canceled, there will be **no** Sunday evening activities. **During the week**, we will follow the Dubuque Community Schools closings and/or delays. Please be diligent in planning for winter weather circumstances.

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our annual Community Blue Christmas Service will be held at First Congregational United Church of Christ (255 W 10th St, Dubuque) on **Wednesday, December 18th at 6:30pm**. Childcare will be available. This gentle, contemplative service offers space for the complex feelings we may be carrying during this holiday season. Come and be reminded God walks with us in the valleys and in our pain, as well as in our joy and celebration.

Our Lessons & Carols Christmas Eve Worship will be held at First Presbyterian Church on Tuesday, December 24th at 7:00pm. Come and celebrate our newborn king, Jesus the Christ! ***We are in the process of arranging for a trolley and carpooling to transport members down to First Presbyterian and back to avoid any possible parking issues.***

Tithes and offerings collected in today's service will be contributed to the general fund of First Presbyterian Church. As a faithful pledger, you are encouraged to continue your giving patterns to either WPC or FPC. This can be done via electronic giving, mail, or simply holding your pledge until worship is at the church of your pledge commitment.

Join us Tonight for Sunday Night Fellowship at Westminster

5:30 Meal and Fellowship

6:00 - 7:00 child Care Available

"The Shepherd" movie for all ages in Fellowship Hall

A take on the birth of Jesus through the eyes of the Shepherds.

Mom's on Fire, lower level classroom

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

We are in the process of combining those that provide treats on Sunday into one group from FPC & WPC to that of a new group. The treat will be after Church Service & we will eliminate the donut hole treats. To do this we will need families from both FPC & WPC to sign up. Pastor Stephanie has provided a list of families from FPC. We need families from WPC to sign up. Please give Rich Henderson your name if you would like to do this. We hope to get enough families so we can have at least 2 families for each Sunday for a month.

A Brighter Christmas is in the Bag! A reminder that all filled tote bags to support the Dubuque Food Pantry's Christmas Baskets for our needy family neighbors are **due back on Sunday, December 15th** when we worship at Westminster. If you didn't get a reusable tote bag last week you can pick up one today before or after worship. A list of needed items is included in each bag. Take the bag home and fill it up with some of the food and other items from the needs list. All the food will be blessed during worship on December 15th and delivered to the Dubuque Food Pantry the next morning. Thanks for helping with this Mission Team project.



**Deacons Fund:
Memorial Poinsettias for Church Decorations at FPC & WPC
Donations accepted through Dec. 15.**

Use a **form** or email marykay@wpcdbq.org or call the office at 583-1729 and mail your \$15 or \$25 memorial donation. Include who your Poinsettia is in memory of or in honor of.



Wreaths for Church Decorations

Would you like to donate a Christmas wreath in honor of or in memory of a special someone? Fill out an envelope on the counter in church or email Mary Kay at marykay@wpcdbq.org and mail your check for **\$23**. Include the name of who your wreath is in memory of. Donations accepted through Dec. 15.



Be sure to stop in the church office to order Christmas **gift cards**. **NO LATER THAN Dec. 15th** Order from over 400 vendors and Karla can have them for you after December 18. Local cards always available.

Many Thanks to Arlys Williams for her donation to purchase 3 new headphones and receivers, as well as replacement batteries for the existing 7 hearing assistant devices. Arlys, we appreciate your important donation so others can hear God's word!

HUNGER OUTREACH VOLUNTEERS NEEDED ON DECEMBER 21st

Our next Hunger Outreach food distribution will be on Saturday, December 21st at Westminster. We will need around 30 volunteers from 8:00-10:30 a.m. to greet and register participants, organize food for distribution, load food into cars, assist walk-up recipients and provide traffic control. We can provide everyone with a job that matches their comfort level. Sign up today on our sign-up sheet or contact Tom Stovall at 563-581-7220 or at tomstov@aol.com

Green Team Tip – Recycle Electronics

With Christmas almost here, new electronics may likely be under the tree this year. If so, be sure to make room for the new by finding out how and where to safely recycle the old. Check with Dubuque Metropolitan Area Solid Waste Agency (DMASWA) at www.dmaswa.org or call them at 563-557-8220.

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**HAVE A PRAYER CONCERN OR JOY TO SHARE?** Folks on the **FPC Prayer Chain** would be honored to pray for you. Simply email Pastor Stephanie at [fpcdbq.pastor@gmail.com](mailto:fpcdbq.pastor@gmail.com), and she will distribute your request. You may also join the FPC Prayer Chain this way!

### **CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER LIST FOR WESTMINSTER**

- For **Janet Porter's** recovery & healing from hip surgery.
- For **Mark Thetford** who passed away on November 25<sup>th</sup> at Bethany Home.
- For **Joyce Veach**, Mary Kay's sister in-law, who has liver cancer.
- For **HannaRose Otting's** brain health concerns.
- For **Doug & Lois Pearce's** ongoing health issues. Doug is at rehab at Grand Meadows.
- For all those on the **Deacons Care List**.

**For Pastoral Care** please call the **pastoral care # 563-279-4545** with your pastoral needs or call the office at 563-583-1729.

**Sunday, December 8 – Pick up Food Pantry Tote Bags**

9:30am – **Worship & Christmas Play** at FPC

**Coffee, treats and fellowship following worship.**

5:30pm – Food, Faith and Fellowship, WPC

6pm – Partnership Task Force Mtg., WPC, BR

**Monday, December 9**

5:30pm – Mission Mtg., WPC, WR

6pm – Pack 20 Mtg., WPC, FH

**Tuesday, December 10**

9am – Tai Chi, WPC-Narthex

9am-1pm Pastor's Office Hours at WPC

1:30pm – Finance Mtg., WPC, WR

1:30pm – IaNice Committee, WPC, BR

**Wednesday, December 11**

8am – Men's Coffee, WPC, BR

11:15am – Staff Mtg., WPC

5pm - Handbells Rehearsal, WPC, SA

5:15pm – PIN, WPC, BR

7pm – Choir Rehearsal, WPC, SA

**Thursday, December 12**

9am-1pm Pastor's Office Hours at WPC

10:30am – Good Futures Cohort Mtg., WPC, BR

4pm – St. Vincent de Paul, WPC, BR

**Saturday, December 14**

9am – Eby & Blairs, WPC, SA

4pm – Goedken Family Christmas, WPC, FH, K

**Sunday, December 15 – Bring Back Food Pantry Tote Bags**

9:30am – **Worship & Children's Church** at WPC

**Coffee, treats and fellowship following worship.**

1:30pm – Worship at Bethany Home

5:30pm – Food, Faith and Fellowship, WPC

**PASTOR STEPHANIE'S SERMONS** are available in print form. If you are interested in receiving a copy of her sermon via email or mail, please contact her directly at [fpcdbq.pastor@gmail.com](mailto:fpcdbq.pastor@gmail.com) or 507.227.8537

# CHURCH STAFF

## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

**Pastor:** Rev. Stephanie Ells

**Liturgist:** Annalee Ward

**Director of Music and Choir Director:** Kristen Eby

**Musician:** Luke Tyler

**Streaming Team:** Mark Stant and Tom Boelk

**Coffee Hour Host:** Deb Stant

[507-227-8537](tel:507-227-8537) | [firstpresdbq@gmail.com](mailto:firstpresdbq@gmail.com) | [www.firstpresdbq.org](http://www.firstpresdbq.org)

## WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

**Preacher:** Rev. Stephanie Ells

**Care Coordinator:** Sam Wu #563-279-4545

**Director of Music:** Dr. Luke Tyler

**Handbell Director:** Kristen Eby

**Choir Director:** Steve Peake

**Timbrel & Lyre Director:** Dr. Luke Tyler

**Band Director:** Sally Stulken

**Organist/Pianist:** Dr. Luke Tyler

**Church Administrator:** Mary Kay Pancratz

**Financial Secretary:** Becky Jenkins

**Custodian:** Josh Henry

**Worship Tech:** Deb Seiffert, Marsha Wilfong,  
Bruce Hallahan

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