

READING THE BIBLE AGAIN

(Maybe for the first time)



According to the First Christians

Rev. Betsy Swetenburg

August 23, 2026

westpreschurch.org



WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN

WELCOME TO WESTMINSTER

Wherever you are on your journey of faith, you are welcome here.

At Westminster Presbyterian Church, we are a community learning to follow Jesus together. Our purpose is simple and bold: **Celebrating Grace. Following Jesus. Healing God's World.** We seek to live that out through: inspiring worship, deep belonging, and tangible compassion.

A FEW THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT US:

You will be warmly welcomed and genuinely known.

Westminster is large enough to offer depth and opportunity, yet small enough that relationships matter. We believe faith grows best in community, where people are seen, remembered, and cared for.

Worship here is joyful, thoughtful, and musically rich.

Rooted in the Reformed tradition, our worship engages both heart and mind. We cherish the beauty of tradition while allowing it to breathe through vibrant music, meaningful liturgy, and a spirit of creativity.

Our faith shows up beyond our walls.

We believe following Jesus leads us toward compassion. From caring for neighbors in crisis to working toward deeper healing in our community, Westminster seeks to embody God's love in tangible ways.

CHILDREN IN WORSHIP

The wiggles, whispers, and wonder children bring to worship only add to the joy. Children are always welcome in the Sanctuary. Worship bags are available in the narthex, and our nursery is open during the service for children ages three and under. However you and your children participate today, we're glad you're here.

JOIN US!

We believe the church is a gift everyone deserves to enjoy; a community of people committed to doing life together—enduring heartaches, celebrating joys, seeking out laughter, and pursuing a more just world as we follow the path of Jesus. We welcome new members on the third Sunday of every month. If you think Westminster may be the community for you, please reach out to Meredith Spaugh, Director of Community Connections.

*If today is your first visit, or one of many,
we hope you'll come back and learn to follow Jesus with us.*

10 AM SERVICE

GATHERING MUSIC

*Act Justly, Love Mercy, Walk Humbly
Can't Stay Down
You Bless Me*

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

*CALL TO WORSHIP

We are God's church:

we come together to worship.

God has called us into this body:

we come together to share our lives.

God has freed us from our past:

we come together to move forward.

God has placed words of scripture on our lips:

we go out to share them with the world.

God has given us the Spirit:

we come together to celebrate.

*HYMN OF PRAISE #305

Come Sing, O Church, in Joy

*CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

Almighty God, our world is filled with corruption:

power disguises itself as truth;

conveniences masquerade as goodness;

selfish pleasure imitates love.

We confess to you, O God, that we have been caught in the web of the world's sin.

By the power of your Spirit, save us from these deceptions and free us to live as your children, that we may see the joy of the resurrection. Amen.

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

*SUNG RESPONSE

Baptized in Water

Baptized in water, sealed by the Spirit,

marked with the sign of Christ our King;

Born of the Spirit, we are God's children;

joyfully now God's praises we sing.

*You are invited to rise in body or spirit.

Bolded font denotes unison speaking & singing.

10 AM SERVICE

SHARING GOD'S STORY WITH OUR CHILDREN & DEDICATION OF BACKPACKS

SCRIPTURE

Acts 2:42-47

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

According to the First Christians | Rev. Betsy Swetenburg

ANTHEM

Your Love Keeps Lifting Me Higher

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & 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.**

SHARING OF GIFTS & OFFERTORY

The Strangers Guise

*We saw a stranger yesterday.
We put food in the eating place,
Drink in the drinking place,
Music in the listening place.*

*And with the sacred name of the Triune God,
he blessed us and our house,
and our cattle, and our dear ones.*

*As the lark says in her song:
"Often, often, often goes the Christ
in the stranger's guise."
"Often, often, often goes the Christ
in the stranger's guise."
"Often, often, often goes the Christ
in the stranger's guise."*

*We saw a stranger yesterday.
"Often, often, often goes the Christ
in the stranger's guise."*

10 AM SERVICE

*DOXOLOGY

OLD HUNDREDTH

Praise God from Whom all blessings flow
Praise God all creatures here below
Praise God above ye heavenly host
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost

*CHARGE & BENEDICTION

Go out into God's world in peace; have courage;
Hold on to what is good; return no one evil for evil;
Strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak;
Help the suffering; honor all persons;
Love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

*SENDING HYMN

We Are One Body

POSTLUDE

Allegro maestoso e vivace, Sonata No. 2 / Felix Mendelssohn

*You are invited to rise in body or spirit.

Bolded font denotes unison speaking & singing.

WORSHIP LEADERS

PREACHING

Rev. Betsy Swetenburg

LITURGIST

Rev. Sam Perkins

Rev. Cindy Higgins

MUSIC

Tyson Baker, Bass

Kim Harrison, Vocals

Tom Swanton, Guitar

Jane Whitlow, Vocals

Kassem Williams, Drums

Colleen Chenail, Violin

Clint Whitlow, Director of Music

Laura Alexander, Associate Director of Music

Westminster Summer Choir

FLOWERS IN WORSHIP

The flowers in worship today are given to the glory of God and in honor of Sally Zeillmann, Assistant Director of Children's Ministry, with gratitude for her nearly eight years of faithful service to Westminster and with many blessings as she begins a new chapter in her life.

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336-299-3785 | westpreschurch.org

COMING UP AT WESTMINSTER

SERVICE OF INSTALLATION & RECEPTION

Sunday, August 30 | Worship 10 a.m. | Sanctuary

Join us on Sunday, August 30, as we celebrate the installation of the Rev. Betsy Swetenburg as Westminster's Pastor & Head of Staff. The Rev. Dr. Tom Tewell will preach a sermon titled "The Missing Puzzle Piece" and pastors and elders from Salem Presbytery will participate in worship. Following the service, everyone is invited to the Fellowship Hall for a reception marking this joyful milestone in the life of Westminster.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS: PROMISES FOR A WHOLE LIFE

New Sermon Series Begins Sunday, September 13

The Ten Commandments are often treated simply as rules to follow, but what if we understood them as promises for life as it was meant to be lived? They begin not with demands, but with grace. Before God tells the Israelites how to live, God reminds them who they are: already loved and already chosen.

As we begin a new year of worship, faith formation, and fellowship, this sermon series will explore the commandments as invitations into a more spacious and faithful way of living—rooted in the good news that we belong to God & one another.



As our summer worship schedule winds down, we want to remind you that beginning September 13, Westminster will return to its standard Sunday schedule, with worship at 9 and 11 a.m. and Faith Formation for all ages at 10 a.m.



westpresinsta



Westminster Presbyterian GSO



WestminsterPresbyterianGSO

WESTMINSTER STAFF

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