



WESTMINSTER

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH • BUFFALO

DECEMBER 15, 2019

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

8:15 AM IN THE HOLMES CHAPEL

10:30 AM IN THE SANCTUARY

THE REVEREND DR. THOMAS H. YORTY
PASTOR



Worship in the Sanctuary • 10:30 AM

Welcome to this Place of Christian Worship

Do not wait for someone else to begin worship. Pray silently for yourself, for those about you, for the poor and the oppressed, for those present, for those who will shortly lead our common worship. Latecomers may enter the Sanctuary during the singing of the first hymn or during the Response to the Assurance. Ushers are available for assistance. Please turn off all cell phones

Opening Voluntary

Reprise on *E'en so, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come*

Paul Manz[†] (1919-2009)

It is the tradition of this congregation to remain silent during the Opening Voluntary as we collectively prepare for worship.

Welcome and Announcements

Dr. Yorty

Receiving and Welcoming of New Members

Alex Davis, Isabelle Kogo, Alanna Paris, Monica Spaulding, and Amanda Ventura

As members of the one holy catholic and apostolic church, you do not come to us as strangers, but as sisters and brothers in the Lord. Please renew your vows of baptism by answering the call to discipleship.

Who is your Lord and Savior?

Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior.

Do you trust him?

I do.

Do you intend to be his disciple, to obey his word, and to show his love?

I do.

Will you be a faithful member of this congregation, giving of yourself in every way, and will you seek the fellowship of the church wherever you go?

I will.

Members of the congregation, let us greet our new friends.

We, the officers and members of this congregation, bid you welcome to our work and worship, and pledge to you our Christian fellowship. We pray that all of us united by our faith may grow into the likeness of Jesus our Lord.

Order of Worship

Chiming of the Trinity

The sounding of the chimes, invoking Creator, Son, and Holy Spirit, is an invitation to prepare for worship through a time of silent reflection. Please be respectful of those who are praying.

As we begin the new liturgical year and the season of Advent, it may be noted that a few things in our service change. Our paraments will change to purple, the color of Advent. While the world anticipates Christmas in red and green, the church uses purple, the same color used during the season of Lent. Purple is the color of royalty, but it is also the color of penitence. During these penitential seasons, we do not sing the congregational Gloria or the Alleluia at the Gospel reading; we will sing the Old Hundredth Doxology, which eliminates the Alleluias that we sing during festival days and ordinary time.

Lighting of the Third Advent Candle

The Vitagliano and Coheley families: Kathy Vitagliano and Marissa, Gabriel, Grace, and Gianna Coheley.

In the Gospel of Luke, John the Baptizer points to Jesus:

As the people were filled with expectation,

Questioning whether John might be the Messiah,

John answered them by saying, "I baptize you with water,

But the one who is more powerful than I is coming;

He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."

If we follow Jesus Christ,

We will get everything we hope for, and more than we bargained for.

We light our third candle to praise God whose Spirit comes to us,

With disturbing and wonderful blessings.

Living Christ, give us faith to trust you,

Hope to follow you, and love to live for you.

We trust you, we love you, we praise you. Amen.



Gospel Acclamation

The people stand.



Gospel Lesson

The people stand.

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Matthew 11:2-11

²When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?' ⁴Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.' ⁷As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is the one about whom it is written, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you." ¹¹Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Gospel Acclamation



Sermon

What Sort of Messiah?

Hymn

My Soul Gives Glory to My God

MORNING SONG

The people stand to sing. Hymn can be found on page 13.

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory Anthem

E'en So, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come

Paul Manz

Peace be to you and grace from Him who freed us from our sin,
Who loved us all and shed His blood that we might saved be.

Sing holy, holy to our Lord, the Lord Almighty God, who was and is and is to come.

Rejoice in heaven, all ye that dwell therein, rejoice on earth, ye saints below, for Christ is coming soon!

E'en so, Lord Jesus, quickly come, and night shall be no more;

They need no light, nor lamp, nor sun, for Christ will be their all.

Presentation of the Gifts

The people stand as the Deacons come forward and remain standing for the Prayer of Dedication.

OLD HUNDRETH





Prayer of Dedication

Thanks be to you, O God, maker of heaven and earth
Giver of justice, lover of righteousness,
Hope of the afflicted, and friend of the poor.
Your faithfulness never fails.
Take and use these gifts we offer
To further your purpose in the world
And to fulfill the promise of the world to come;
Through Christ our Lord we pray. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Concluding with the Lord's Prayer

Rev. Hennessy

**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 trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil;
For thine is the kingdom and the power
And the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

Sending Hymn

Return, My People
The people stand to sing. Hymn can be found on page 13.

REPTON

Benediction

Closing Voluntary

Bring a Torch, Jeanette Isabella

Keith Chapman (1945-1989)

Immediately following worship, please join us in the Parish Hall for our annual Advent Dinner.

Worship Leaders

The Reverend Dr. Thomas H. Yorty, Pastor
The Reverend Katelyn Nutter Dowling, Associate Pastor for Christian Education
The Reverend Beth Hennessy
Ray Herman, Liturgist
Garrett F. Martin, Organist and Director of Music Ministries
The Westminster Choir

Deacons Serving Today

Wisdom Afealete, Peter Ahrens, Janet Kifner-Arnatt, Drew Dees, Kate Dierenfield,
Roberta Nickelsen, Joan Rice, Roy Stewart, Ron Sutz

The Christmas tree in the Narthex is a gift from Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Speth.

Notes on Today's Music

‡**Paul Otto Manz** was an American Lutheran composer for choir and organ. His most famous choral work, "E'en So, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come" sung today, has been performed around the world. He also wrote many chorale preludes and hymn-based partitas for the organ. He served the Church as church musician, professor, and recitalist.

He was trained as a Lutheran teacher at Concordia University Chicago and earned a Master's Degree in Music at Northwestern University. A Fulbright grant enabled him to study with Flor Peeters in Belgium and Helmut Walcha in Germany.

Over the course of his lifetime Paul Manz received many honors. He was twice named one of the "Ten Most Influential Lutherans" as well as one of the "101 Most Notable Organists of the 20th Century." He received the Gutenberg Award from the Chicago Bible Society and the Wittenberg Arts Award from the Lutheran Institute in Washington D. C. He had honorary doctorates from Valparaiso University and St. Olaf College.

Manz was most famous for his celebrated "hymn festivals" involving the organ with congregation, choir, and instrumentalists, often with commentary. His original manuscripts are archived at the Center for Church Music, Concordia University Chicago.

WORSHIP AND PREACHING SCHEDULE

Sunday Worship
8:15 AM in the Holmes Chapel with Communion
10:30 AM in the Sanctuary

December 22
Fourth Sunday of Advent
The Reverend Dr. Thomas H. Yorty
Matthew 1:18-25
Crucible Faith: Messiah in Disguise

Family Service
December 24 • 5:15 PM
A service of harp, choirs, and carols for all ages.
The QED Vocal Ensemble will present Benjamin Britten's *Ceremony of Carols*.

83rd Annual Lessons and Carols
December 24 • 10 PM
The Westminster Choirs pay tribute to the traditional Lessons and Carols service format which began at Truro Cathedral, Cornwall. Nine scripture texts alternating with choral anthem and congregational carols help prepare for the birth of Jesus.
The Choirs of Westminster, The Western New York Chamber Orchestra, The Buffalo Brass, The QED Vocal Ensemble, and the Westminster Handbell Choir lead us in this festival service — one of Western New York's cherished Christmas traditions.

December 29
One Service at 10:30 AM
The Reverend Dr. Thomas H. Yorty
Matthew 2:13-23; *Crucible Faith*
The Teetering Powers

January 5
One Service at 10:30 AM
The Reverend Dr. Thomas H. Yorty

Live Stream Worship Services Each Sunday
Visit us on Facebook: Westminster Presbyterian Church • Buffalo

THIS WEEK AT WESTMINSTER

Sunday, December 15 * Advent III

8:00 AM Infant/Toddler Care
8:15 AM Worship/Communion
9:00 AM Case Library Conversations
9:00 AM Heavenly Grounds
9:15 AM Year of the Bible
9:15 AM Spiritual Life
9:30 AM Dialogue Diner
9:30 AM Choir Rehearsal
10:30 AM Worship/Christmas Pageant/New Members Welcome
10:40 AM Youth Holiday Party
10:40 AM Sunday School
12:00 PM Holiday Advent Dinner

Monday, December 16

8:00 AM WEDI Meeting
1:00 PM WEDI Staff Meeting
1:00 PM WOW Bible Study
4:30 PM ENERGY/ FLY Program
7:00 PM Year of the Bible

Tuesday, December 17

7:15 AM Wake Up Group
9:00 AM Management Meeting
3:00 PM Buildings & Grounds
4:30 PM ENERGY/ FLY Program
6:00 PM Zen Dharma

Wednesday, December 18

7:15 AM AA Meeting
8:00 AM WEDI Board Meeting
9:00 AM Worship Planning
12:00 PM Wed. @ WPC - The American Caroling Co.
4:30 PM ENERGY/ FLY Program
5:30 PM Pathways To Peace
8:00 PM AA Meeting

Thursday, December 19

7:15 AM Wake Up Group
4:30 PM ENERGY/ FLY Program
6:00 PM Handbells
7:00 PM Christmas Rehearsal
7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal

Friday, December 20

12:00 PM Noontime AI-Anon
4:30 PM ENERGY/ FLY Program
7:30 PM Christmas @ Westminster

Sunday, December 22 • Advent IV

8:00 AM Infant/Toddler Care
8:15 AM Worship/Communion
9:00 AM Case Library Conversations
9:00 AM Heavenly Grounds
9:15 AM Year of the Bible
9:15 AM Spiritual Life
9:30 AM Choir Rehearsal
10:30 AM Worship
10:40 AM Sunday School
11:30 AM Meet & Mingle



2019 Christmas Eve Offering at Westminster

Every year on Christmas Eve, we hear the story about a woman away from home and about to give birth. We imagine the fear of sleeping rough in a stable and the trauma of giving birth on the ground surrounded by animals. We are confronted with the horrors of homelessness.

Like Mary and Joseph, people still find themselves threatened by homelessness from circumstances that overwhelm them. Job loss, death of a loved one, medical expenses or disability are some of the threats to a family's ability to maintain a roof over their heads. This year, our Christmas Eve offering is being given to the Emergency Financial Assistance Program, a program that aims to prevent eviction by provided up to \$750 in emergency aid to people who are temporarily encountering financial hardship. The program is administrated by Catholic Charities and is open to all people in need.

These people are helped to stay in their homes and are given other wraparound services to stabilize their financial lives. We usually divide our Christmas Eve offering between two non-profit organizations, but this year we have chosen to concentrate our gifts on the prevention of homelessness, because the need is so large and the resources are so small.

To contribute by check, please make payable to Westminster Presbyterian Church, and note "Christmas Eve Offering" in the memo.

NOW & EVER

**GIVING 2020
PRESERVE THE PINNACLE**

Pledges received as of 12/13/2019	Number of Pledges Received	Total Pledges Received	Dollars to Goal
GIVING 2020	117	\$352,700	247,300
PRESERVE THE PINNACLE	124	\$2,874,532	\$1,225,468

The "Now & Ever - Giving 2020• Preserve the Pinnacle Capital Campaign" is well underway! Pledge packets have been distributed and we ask that you please return your signed *Giving 2020* pledge card by Sunday, December 22 and your *Preserve the Pinnacle* pledge card at your earliest convenience. There is a basket on the table in the Holmes Room where you can place your completed pledge cards.

For your convenience, you may make a pledge, and a pledge payment to *Giving 2020*, as well as a pledge to *Preserve the Pinnacle* on our secure site at www.wpcbuffalo.org/giving. Our goal for *Giving 2020* is \$600,000 and for *Preserve the Pinnacle* is \$4.1 million. As you prayerfully think about your pledge, please consider increasing your pledge for *Giving 2020* by either increasing your weekly offering by a few dollars, or making an overall 5% increase to insure that we successfully accomplish our goal. Please know that whatever you contribute to the "Now & Ever - Giving 2020• Preserve the Pinnacle Capital Campaign" is greatly appreciated.

NEWS AND NOTES

WELCOME TO WESTMINSTER

If you are visiting and would like to learn more about our programming or mission, please fill out a Welcome Card (found in the pews) and return it to a deacon or staff member.

- As a More Light church, we invite all persons of the LGBTQIA+ community to membership and full participation in all ministries of Westminster.
- We light our Peace Candle to pray for peace—both in our own neighborhoods and across the world.
- Bibles and children's worship guides are available at the Sanctuary entrances.
- For the hearing impaired, wireless receivers are available in the Church Conference Room.
- Childcare for children 5 years old and younger is available from 8 AM-11:30 AM in the school building (across the garden).
- If you need assistance at any time, please ask a Deacon.
- Please pick up your generosity envelopes, which are available on the table in the Holmes Room.

CHURCH LIFE

INQUIRER CLASS

February 9 following 10:30 AM Worship

Friends and visitors interested in learning more about Westminster and the ministries we support are invited to attend a meeting in the Case Library immediately following worship. We will share Westminster's history, discuss current outreach and mission programs in the city and region, and answer any questions. At the conclusion of the meeting, those who so desire will be received into the membership of the church. For more information, please contact Sawrie Becker, 884-9437, ext. 315, sbecker@wpcbuffalo.org

MISSION AND OUTREACH

WESTMINSTER'S ALCOHOL/OTHER DRUG EDUCATION AND REFERRAL SERVICE

This service provides support to assist members and friends with issues and questions related to abuse of alcohol or other drugs. If you or someone you love needs help, call for free and confidential advice. Jen Read (228.7526) and Elizabeth Stewart (585.217.7878), Co-Chairs; Dave Carstensen (884.5403), Jane Morris (571.481.1839), Ellen Smith (431.9284), Phil Stevens (247.3824).

BOOKCASES NEEDED FOR ENERGY/ FLY PROGRAMS

Any size (particularly small ones!) will be appreciated. Please drop off at the church. Any questions, contact Betsy Biggar at 716.803.2100.

WEST SIDE BAZAAR

Check out The West Side Bazaar, 25 Grant Street, for lunch and shopping. Sunday and Monday: Closed. Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 11 AM-7 PM. Friday: 11 AM-8 PM, Saturday: 10 AM-8 PM.

ENERGY

The name ENERGY reflects what we value: Education, Nurture, Encouragement, Readiness, and Growth for Youth. The ENERGY school-year program gathers Monday through Friday from 3:30 PM-6 PM at Westminster and offers a robust place for children, whose families are refugees and recently immigrated to this country, to develop English-

language skills, self-confidence, and cultural awareness. Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, students receive a one-on-one experience with trained volunteer tutors and staff. If you are interested in reading with children, helping with homework, cooking meals, or leading lessons or activities, contact volunteer@wedibuffalo.org

THE ANGEL TREE

Time to select and return your wrapped Angel Gifts. Gifts will be distributed to various agencies around WNY to help those in need. **Please return all angels today, Sunday, December 15. Help is needed to sort gifts today after worship and for delivery at 9:00 AM, Monday, December 16.** All gifts you purchase must be wrapped when you return them.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

CONFIRMATION CLASS

Our Confirmation Class is in conjunction with Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church. Confirmation is a "rite of initiation" that welcomes young people that have grown up in the faith (or not) to take the Presbyterian Church as their own set of beliefs and polity. For many students, church has been something they've gone to because of you—their parents. This is a wonderful gift you have given your child: a solid foundation on which to build their own faith. Confirmation is a chance for the student to ask questions, dig deep, and stand in front of our congregation and proclaim the PCUSA to be their church of their own free will and choosing. If your student is in grade 8 or above and have not gone through confirmation, please contact Katelyn at katelynnd@wpcbuffalo.org to sign up and begin the process of finding a mentor!

DIALOGUE DINER

Dialogue Diner is a weekly breakfast and fellowship for students 6th-12th grade. We start today and go through the 22nd. Come start your Sunday off with good food and good community. We meet in the Parish Hall kitchen from 9:30AM to 10:15AM before worship.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY: YEAR OF THE BIBLE CLASS

Sunday mornings, 9:15 AM-10:15 AM in the Parish Hall and Monday evenings 7 PM-8:15 PM in the Case Library. Our journey through the entire Bible, from Genesis through Revelation, will come to an end on December 31 as we read the wonderfully appropriate final words of Revelation 22: "Come, Lord Jesus! The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints. Amen" Congratulations to all those who will "graduate"! We're certain to offer the class again in the not-too-distant future, so you too will have your opportunity to explore the world of the Word as you spend a Year with the Bible!

CASE LIBRARY CONVERSATION SERIES

Sundays, 9 AM-10:15 AM in the Case Library

December 15

The Gospel According to Matthew

Hear an analysis of this different version of the birth story and look at some of the stunning artistic interpretations.

Presenter: Rebecca and John Montague

December 22

The Apocrypha and Hanukkah

Presenter: Doug Braun

Hear about some birth stories maybe you aren't familiar with, and the story behind Hanukkah. Also, a look at some very different nativity sets. Joseph with a man bun?!

SPIRITUAL LIFE

Sundays, 9 AM-10:15 AM in the Heritage Room

December 15

Honoring the Advent Season

Presenter: Elizabeth Stewart

Christmas is a day of celebration and joyful times with family and friends, good food, and laughter. Yet in the midst of merriment, many of us find ourselves feeling alone. Join us as we learn to reflect on the season of Advent and the practices which bring us closer to a fulfillment of the joy of Christmas.

WOW LUNCHTIME BIBLE STUDY

Monday, December 16 • 1 PM-2:30 PM in the Case Library

Women of Westminster cordially invites you to a Brown Bag Lunchtime Bible study on the 3rd Monday of each month in the Case Library. This year we will explore the Horizons Bible study, *Love Carved in Stone: A Fresh Look at the Ten Commandments*. Each lesson begins with an exploration of one of the Ten Words in its biblical context. From there, we consider a moment from Jesus' life that shows us how he lived out that Word. We then consider the Word for our own lives and contexts. There will be a nominal fee for the book.

FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

KNITTING GROUP

Our group meets on occasional days throughout the year and works on their individual projects, as well as prayer shawls, scarves, and other handmade items for members of the church. Contact Fran Holmes for information or dates, mfranholmes@verizon.net

PASSAGES: A PROGRAM FOR OLDER ADULTS

Tuesday, January 7 • Lunch: 12:30 PM in the Case Library

Topic: Gender Development

Speaker: Tom Mazur Co-director, Center for Psychosexual Health.

Mr. Mazur is an expert in the psycho-social development of children and youth in the areas of sexuality, gender identity, as well as disorders of sexual development. Tom trained at Johns Hopkins and has counseled families and individuals at Womens and Children's Hospital since 1979. He is currently co-director of the Center for Psychosexual Health. The goal of Tom's presentation is not only to educate us but also answer questions each of us may have regarding such new terms as LGBTQ and more, including pronoun confusion and the new gender linguistics.

JANUARY MEETUP

Looking for a post holiday pick-me-up? Let's meet up at the West Side Bazaar, 24 Grant Street, on Saturday, January 18 at 11 AM. Come browse and find interesting items for sale from around the world and stay for lunch. Bring friends who may have never experienced the Bazaar. We'll have a tour and hear of the exciting expansion planned for the Bazaar. Sign up in the Gallery Room. Contact Carol Greetham at carolgreetham@gmail.com if you have any questions.

(WOW) WOMEN OF WESTMINSTER WINTER RETREAT

Friday, January 24, through Sunday, January 26, at Lake Chautauqua Lutheran Center. We begin Friday evening with a light supper of chili (one is vegetarian) and ends Sunday morning after worship. It is a weekend filled with many things (everything is optional): workshops, relaxing, sharing laughter, and getting to know one another better, spending time in your room, or trekking through the (snowy) woods. The cost is \$130 for a double room and \$ 175 for a single. Rooms are assigned on a first come first served basis, depending on when you turn in your reservation form with at least a 50% deposit. The remainder must be paid by the start of the retreat. Cost includes all meals through Sunday breakfast. We car pool from the church parking lot. More details and reservation forms will be available on the Information Table in the Gallery Room or at our website. under "Church Life." Please consider joining us!

MEET AND MINGLE

Please join us on Sundays following 10:30 Worship. Enjoy snacks and fellowship in the Holmes Room with friends old and new! Sponsors, shoppers, and hosts are needed for Meet & Mingle in December. Meet & Mingle is a great way to celebrate a special person or occasion. For more information please sign up in the Gallery Room or contact Sawrie Becker, sbecker@wpcbuffalo.org

AROUND OUR COMMUNITY

Theatre of Youth Company, Inc. (TOY) stimulates the imagination, nurtures the creative spirit, and enhances the education of young people by engaging them in relevant, child-centered, and professionally-produced live theatre programs. For information on workshops held at Westminster, visit theatreofyouth.org

DID YOU KNOW...

That since the Now & Ever combined *2020 Annual Giving* and *Preserve the Pinnacle Capital Campaign* was formally launched to congregation on Sunday, October 27, we have been pleased to receive gifts and pledges to both. If you have not yet returned your pledge cards, please do so as soon as possible as it is imperative to our financial planning. Both the annual budget and the capital campaign need your generous support *Now & Ever!* Thank you.

GIVING 2020 AND PRESERVE THE PINNACLE

Now & Ever Giving 2020 and Preserve the Pinnacle Pledge Packets were distributed over the course of four weeks in November. If you were unable to pick your packet up, it will be mailed to you. Thank you for returning your commitments to these two important campaigns at your earliest convenience.

ADVENT DINNER TODAY

Join us in the Parish Hall following 10:30 AM Worship to enjoy a delicious turkey dinner and wonderful side dishes which will please all ages. Vegetarian meals are available with advance request. \$12 for ages 9 and over (no charge for 8 and under), \$45 for a family. Walk-ins welcomed!

SAVE THE DATE!

Valentine's Day MeetUP • Friday, February 14, 2020

For Adults: Lively Music • Tasty Drinks • Great Food!

For Children: Games • Music • Kid's Food • Surprises!

More information to come!



Psalm

Psalm 146:4-9

⁴Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help! whose hope is in the Lord their God; ⁵Who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them; who keeps his promise for ever; ⁶Who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to those who hunger. ⁷The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind; the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; ⁸The Lord loves the righteous; the Lord cares for the stranger; he sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked. ⁹The Lord shall reign forever, your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!

Gospel Lesson

The people stand.

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Matthew 11:2-11

²When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?' ⁴Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.' ⁷As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is the one about whom it is written, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you." ¹¹Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Meditation

What Sort of Messiah?

Prayers of the People

Concluding with the Lord's Prayer

Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

We distribute the elements of communion by intinction – simply take the bread and dip it in the cup. It is appropriate to say "Amen" or "Thanks be to God" when receiving the bread and the cup as they are gifts of God for the people of God. Westminster serves only gluten-free and dairy-free bread.

Sending Hymn

Return, My People

The people stand to sing. Hymn can be found on page 13.

REPTON

Benediction

Closing Voluntary

Bring a Torch, Jeanette Isabella

Keith Chapman (1945-1989)

Worship Leaders

The Reverend Dr. Thomas H. Yorty, Pastor

The Reverend Micah Nutter Dowling, Director of Youth Ministries

Garrett F. Martin, Organist and Director of Music Ministries

Now Bless the God of Israel

FOREST GREEN



1. Now bless the God of Is - ra - el, who comes in love and power,
2. Re - mem - ber - ing the cov - e - nant, God res - cues us from fear,
3. In ten - der mer - cy, God will send the day - spring from on high,



who rais - es from the roy - al house de - liv - erance in this hour.
that we might serve in ho - li - ness and peace from year to year;
our ris - ing sun the light of life for those who sit and sigh.



Through ho - ly proph - ets God has sworn to free us from a - larm,
And you, my child, shall go be - fore to preach, to proph - e - sy,
God comes to guide our way to peace, that death shall reign no more.



to save us from the hea - vy hand of all who wish us harm.
that all may know the ten - der love, the grace of God most high.
Sing prais - es to the Ho - ly One! O wor - ship and a - dore!

My Soul Gives Glory to My God

MORNING SONG



1. My soul gives glo - ry to my God. My heart pours out its praise.
2. My God has done great things for me: yes, ho - ly is God's name.
3. From age to age, to all who fear, such mer - cy love im - parts,
4. Love casts the migh - ty from their thrones, pro - motes the in - se - cure,
5. Praise God, whose lov - ing cov - e - nant sup - ports those in dis - tress,



God lif - ted up my low - li - ness in man - y mar - ve - lous ways.
All peo - ple will de - clare me blessed, and bless - ings they shall claim.
dis - pen - sing jus - tice far and near, dis - miss - ing self - ish hearts.
leaves hun - gry spir - its sat - is - fied, the rich seem sud - den - ly poor.
re - mem - ber - ing past prom - is - es with pres - ent faith - ful - ness.

Return, My People

REPTON



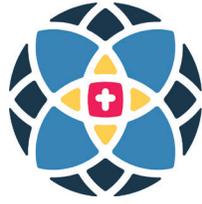
1. Re - turn, my peo - ple, Is - ra - el, with pen - i - ten - tial tear;
2. Fear not, be - lov - ed, hear - ken now: our God has done great things!
3. Then to the faith - ful of the earth the call of God rings clear:



just as the pro - phet did fore - tell the ad - vent of Em - man - u - el,
Your vin - di - ca - tion shall pour down like rain up - on the bar - ren ground,
"Re - turn, my peo - ple, claim your worth, pre - par - ing for your Sav - ior's birth;



God's reign on earth is near! God's reign on earth is near!
glad ti - dings to you bring, glad ti - dings to you bring.
my reign on earth is near. My reign on earth is near."



WESTMINSTER

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH • BUFFALO

724 DELAWARE AVENUE • BUFFALO, NY 14209
WPCBUFFALO.ORG • 716.884.9437

Christmas at Westminster

Wednesdays @ Westminster

December 18 • Noon
The American Caroling Company leads a holiday sing-a-long.

Christmas at Westminster

December 20 • 7:30 PM
•The Choirs of Westminster
•The Western New York Chamber Orchestra
•The Buffalo Brass
•QED Vocal Ensemble
•The Westminster Handbell Choir
•Rosanna Moore, Harp
•Garrett F. Martin, Conductor
•Matthew Marco, Conductor
•Walter S. Mayo, Handbell Choir Conductor

Westminster presents Buffalo's favorite new holiday tradition with something for everyone! Nearly 100 musicians will ring in the Christmas season with classical masterworks, handbell favorites, and treasured congregational Christmas Carols. Bring your family and friends!

Family Service

December 24 • 5:15 PM
A service of harp, choirs, and carols for all ages. The QED Vocal Ensemble will present Benjamin Britten's *Ceremony of Carols*.

83rd Annual Lessons and Carols

December 24 • 10 PM
The Westminster Choirs pay tribute to the traditional Lessons and Carols service format which began at Truro Cathedral, Cornwall. Nine scripture texts alternating with choral anthem and congregational carols help prepare for the birth of Jesus. The Choirs of Westminster, The Western New York Chamber Orchestra, The Buffalo Brass, The QED Vocal Ensemble, and the Westminster Handbell Choir lead us in this festival service — one of Western New York's cherished Christmas traditions.

Westminster Presbyterian Church

The Rev. Dr. Thomas H. Yorty, Pastor
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The Rev. Katelyn Nutter Dowling
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