

Westminster At Worship

A Celebration of Worship

Epiphany

Sacrament of Baptism

January 12, 2025

10:30 a.m.

Please silence your cell phones prior to entering the sanctuary.

†Those who feel comfortable standing may do so.



GATHERING AROUND GOD'S WORD

PRELUDE

SETH CUNNINGHAM

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING PRAYER

†CALL TO WORSHIP

Those who are comfortable standing, are invited to do so, as we
all rise in body or spirit to join in our opening response:

How did you get here?

Window side of the room: I walked, eyes looking up, following
the star.

Wall side of the room: I ran, lunging for a love that is bigger than
me.

Choir and Balcony: I tumbled and fell, tender step after tender
step.

All: I ambled like a river, caught up in God's flow.

I crawled, kissing the earth below me.

Tell me again. How did you get here?

I am here by God's grace and love's pull.

Welcome home.

This is God's house.

There is room for you here.

Let us worship our gracious God.

“As with Gladness Men of Old”

*As with gladness men of old
did the guiding star behold;
as with joy they hailed its light,
leading onward, beaming bright;
so, most gracious Lord, may we
evermore be led to thee.*

*As with joyful steps they sped,
Savior, to thy lowly bed,
there to bend the knee before
thee, whom heaven and earth adore;
so may we with willing feet
ever seek thy mercy seat.*

*As they offered gifts most rare
at thy manger, rude and bare,
so may we with holy joy,
pure and free from sin's alloy,
all our costliest treasures bring,
Christ, to thee, our heavenly king.*

*Holy Jesus, every day
keep us in the narrow way;
and when earthly things are past,
bring our ransomed souls at last
where they need no star to guide,
where no clouds thy glory hide.*

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Let us pray:

God of new beginnings,

**We admit that we often follow the well-worn path,
simply because others have been there before.**

Sometimes this is holy and humble,

but there are days when a new path needs to be tread.

On those new-beginning days, O God,

give us the courage to follow your star.

Give us the courage to go home by another way.

**Give us the courage to kick up some dust and walk in a new
direction**

for the sake of justice, love, and neighbor.

**For when you are doing a new thing, we want to have the
courage to follow.**

With hope in our hearts we wander, we travel.

— A Time of Silent Confession —

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Hear and believe the good news of the Gospel:

**Regardless of the path we travel, of how lost we may get,
or the twists and turns along the way, we do not walk alone.**

We are loved. We are forgiven.

We have every chance to begin again.

Thanks be to God for a love like that!

†RESPONSE TO GOD'S GRACE

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

PRESENTATION

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

Do you, as members of the church of Jesus Christ, promise to guide and nurture Sadie by word and deed, with love and prayer, encouraging her to know and follow Christ and to be a faithful member of this church?

We do.

†AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Do you believe in God, the Father almighty?

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended into hell.**

**On the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
he sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.**

Do you believe in the Holy Ghost?

**I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

THANKSGIVING OVER THE WATER

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

THE BAPTISM

THE WELCOME

Sadie has been received into the one holy catholic and apostolic church through baptism. Let us welcome the newly baptized.

With joy and thanksgiving we welcome you into Christ's church to share with us in his ministry, for we are all one in Christ.

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS

†SHARING GOD'S PEACE

Grateful for the promises we share in our baptisms let us share the peace of Christ with one another. The peace of the Lord be with you.

And also with you.

SPECIAL MUSIC

CONTEMPORARY CHOIR

"God of Wonders" arranged by Larry Shackley

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

READINGS FROM THE SCRIPTURES

Hebrew Lesson

Isaiah 43:16-21

The Lord says—who makes a way in the sea
and a path in the mighty waters,

who brings out chariot and horse,
army and battalion;
they will lie down together and will not rise;
they will be extinguished, extinguished like a wick.
Don't remember the prior things;
don't ponder ancient history.
Look! I'm doing a new thing;
now it sprouts up; don't you recognize it?
I'm making a way in the desert,
paths^[a] in the wilderness.
The beasts of the field,
the jackals and ostriches, will honor me,
because I have put water in the desert
and streams in the wilderness
to give water to my people,
my chosen ones,
this people whom I formed for myself,
who will recount my praise.

Gospel Lesson
Matthew 2:1-12

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in the territory of Judea during the rule of King Herod, magi came from the east to Jerusalem. They asked, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We've seen his star in the east, and we've come to honor him."
When King Herod heard this, he was troubled, and everyone in Jerusalem was troubled with him.
He gathered all the chief priests and the legal experts and asked them where the Christ was to be born. They said, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for this is what the prophet wrote:
You, Bethlehem, land of Judah,
by no means are you least among the rulers of Judah,
because from you will come one who governs,
who will shepherd my people Israel."

Then Herod secretly called for the magi and found out from them the time when the star had first appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search carefully for the child. When you've found him, report to me so that I too may go and honor him." When they heard the king, they went; and look, the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stood over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were filled with joy. They entered the house and saw the child with Mary his mother. Falling to their knees, they honored him. Then they opened their treasure chests and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Because they were warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they went back to their own country by another route.

SERMON

"The Road Isn't Straight"

Rev. Jamie Milton

INVITATION TO OFFERING

MUSICAL OFFERING

CHANCEL CHOIR

"Star-led and Wonder bound"

MARY KAY BEALL

~ Please record your presence on the "Friendship Pad"

†DOXOLOGY

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

†UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Let us pray together:

Glorious God, you led men of wisdom to seek Jesus, your Holy Child, born of Mary. Overjoyed in the presence of his radiant light, the men knelt down at the infant's crib and offered him precious gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

We, too, offer our gifts in gratitude, reverence, and thanksgiving for the birth of your child, whom you called to lead the world into fullness of life.

Receive and bless this offering as a joyful sign of the boundless love and abundant life we are called to share in Christ. Amen.

Please be seated.

RECEIVING OUR STAR WORDS

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.

While the music plays, you are invited to come forward to receive your star word for 2025.

†HYMN *"What Star is This, with Beams So Bright"* PURE NOBIS NASCITUR

*What star is this, with beams so bright,
more lovely than the noonday light?
'Tis sent to announce a newborn king,
glad tidings of our God to bring.*

*'Tis now fulfilled what God decreed,
"From Jacob shall a star proceed";
and lo! the eastern sages stand
to read in heaven the Lord's command.*

*While outward signs the star displays,
an inward light the Lord conveys
and urges them, with tender might,
to seek the giver of the light.*

*O Jesus, while the star of grace
impels us on to seek your face,
let not our slothful hearts refuse
the guidance of your light to use.*

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

Let us go forth rejoicing in the light of God's love.
May the love of Christ that shines in you
shine brightly in the world wherever you go.

And the blessing of God,
Divine Giver, Radiant Light, and Fountain of Life
bless you and keep you always.

POSTLUDE

SETH CUNNINGHAM



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ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR JANUARY 12, 2025

• **CONGRATULATIONS** to Zach and Catherine Bonds on the baptism of their daughter, Sadie Eloise, during today's service.

• Today is the day to receive your **2025 "STAR" WORD!** During worship, each person will receive a star cutout with a word written on it. This will be your own personal word for the new year. Inspired by the Magi following the star to Jesus, receiving a star word to meditate on throughout the new year can deepen your self-reflection and prayer practices. Take it with you and place it somewhere where you will see it everyday. Reflect on this word. Ponder what significance this word has in your life and

how God might be speaking to you through that simple word. Epiphany is the celebration of God's presence breaking through to shine as a light in the darkness. The hope is that this word will find its way into your heart and help you to discern God's presence all around you in new ways. For those who choose to worship online or might miss today's worship, the star cutouts will be available in the Dewitt Street lobby.

• A **NEW SIGN-UP SHEET** has been posted on the wall across from the sanctuary door for those who would like to **provide flowers** for a service in honor, memory or celebration of a loved one or life event.

- **PER CAPITA FOR 2025** is \$30.69. This is per active, confirmed member.
 - **TV AND SOUNDBOARD:** We're looking for individuals who can run the soundboard and help in the TV room on Sunday mornings. If you are interested in helping, please call the church office. Thank you!
 - **BULLETIN BOARDS:** Check out the Church bulletin board just outside the sanctuary for upcoming church events and happenings, **plus sign-up sheets for volunteer opportunities for:**
 - **Westminster Community Pantry**
 - **Food of Faith**
 - **Matthew 25 Cafe**
 - **Fellowship Time Host**
- In addition, the Community bulletin board in Fellowship Hall has information on health screenings, grief groups and other events in the area.
- This year's **ANNUAL MEETING** will be held **Sunday, February 2** as a part of our 10:30 a.m. worship service. The **2025 Congregational Budget** will be presented, and we will be invited to consider the ways in which we can help support God's work through Westminster. Following the worship service, the annual **SOUPER BOWL OF CARING** offering and a soup lunch will be served in the Fellowship Hall.
 - **THE 2024 ANNUAL REPORT** will be available online and in print beginning on Sunday, January 19.
 - **COFFEE AND CONVERSATION** — **Join us on Thursday, January 16 at 1:30 p.m.** Any questions, please call the church office or Rev. Linda.
 - **JOIN US ON FACEBOOK:** Westminster Presbyterian Church-Bay City

Giving to Westminster

There are many ways to share your gifts with Westminster.

Cash and checks are welcome. Please use your offering envelopes or the envelopes found in pew backs and place your gift in the offering plate when it is passed.

Visit our website www.wpcbc.org and click on the "Give Now" button at the top of the page. This will direct you to our Online Giving Portal or simply scan the QR Code below.

Contributions can also be sent through the mail to the attention of the Church Treasurer.

We're grateful for your gifts, however you choose to give. THANK YOU!



Westminster Presbyterian Church

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email: office@wpcbc.org
website: wpcbc.org

Office Hours

Monday - Thursday
8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

- **NURSERY CARE** is available for infants and toddlers during the worship service. Our nursery is equipped with a paging system. Quality childcare is provided by Elaine Edwards who is infant/CPR trained.

- **RIDES TO CHURCH NEEDED:** we have a few church members that need rides to church. If you are able to help, please call the church office. Thank you!

- **YOUTH GROUP DINNERS:** Our Youth Group meets from 5 to 7 p.m. on Sunday nights. This time includes a meal together. If you are able to prepare and serve a meal (foods that young people like, such as mac and cheese, chicken tenders, make-your-own sandwiches, etc.) or donate money towards dinner, please scan the QR code to sign up. Or call the church office.



- **WAYS TO SUPPORT THE WESTMINSTER COMMUNITY PANTRY:** If you would like to sign up to work our **Westminster Community Pantry**, Wednesday evenings, 4 to 6 p.m. or Thursday mornings, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., please see the sign up sheets on the bulletin board outside the sanctuary.

The **JANUARY ITEM OF THE MONTH** is **CHUNKY SOUP**. This is one of the pantry's most popular items, AND it can especially be enjoyed during these cold months. However, it is also an item that we cannot get from the Food Bank. If you would like to leave a donation of chunky soup when the pantry isn't opened, please just leave it by the door. We know how much this will be appreciated.

- **ADULT BIBLE STUDY** classes are offered at two different times to accommodate

various schedules. Join us **Sundays at 9:00 a.m.** in the Session Room or **Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.** via Zoom. The same study materials will be used at both gatherings. Please visit our Adult Bible Study page on our website at www.wpcbc.org or see Rev. Linda or Pastor Jamie with any questions. Over the next several weeks here at Westminster our theme and invitation will be **"Living with Joy"** as we wrap up the Advent/Christmas readings and then move into the lectionary cycle study.

- **LYDIA CIRCLE** The Lydia Circle meets on the third Thursday of each month at 1 p.m. in the Session Room. At the circle planned for **Thursday, January 16**, the group will be looking at the Horizons Bible Study called "Let Justice Roll Down."

- **DEBORAH CIRCLE** will meet at **5 p.m. Thursday, January 23 at the home of Sherry Holley**. We will enjoy a potluck meal before we watch The Chosen. If anyone wants to join, please call Karen Schoeppach at 989-684-1322 or email her at kaysue@chartermi.net.

- **OFFERING ENVELOPES** for **2025** are available for pickup here at the church in the long hallway outside of the sanctuary.

- **THE SAGINAW SPIRIT** are hosting the annual **Faith Night on Sunday, February 2, 2025** at the Dow Event Center. We've had a good group attend the last several years and are looking forward to going again for a fun night of hockey and fellowship. Tickets will be around \$15 (depending on group size). The game against the Soo Greyhounds begins at 5:30 p.m. Contact the Church Office to reserve your spot. Sign up with Leah Sneller or by contacting the church office.