

WESTMINSTER

— Presbyterian Church —

Albany, New York January 5, 2025 Service of Worship 10:00 am

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH Epiphany

HHH

Welcome to Westminster! We're glad you're here.

- If you're visiting us this morning, we would love to meet you and greet you! We invite you to fill out the Welcome Card in the pew and put it in the offering plate or hand it to an usher in the back.
- After worship, please join us downstairs as we continue our fellowship at our coffee hour. We gather in the hall located directly under the sanctuary. Stairs are located through the doors on either side of the front of the sanctuary, followed by another stairway that leads downstairs. Additional stairs and an elevator are available at the rear of the sanctuary. We recognize that our 19th century building can be confusing to navigate! We are here to help—please speak to an usher if you need assistance.

HHHH

WE ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S NAME

(Let the notes of our Prelude be the musical curtain through which we pass as we gather to worship together.

Let the preparation we make together be prayerful.)

Prelude The Star, The Sky, The Promise Gilbert M. Martin

Call to Worship Gail Garrison

Leader: Arise, shine; for your light has come! Isaiah 60:1

All: The glory of God has risen upon us.

Leader: Let us worship God!



Opening Hymn #147

The First Nowell (v. 1, 3, 5)

Psalm 72:2



Prayer of Confession

Gail Garrison

Leader: God judges the nations with righteousness,

and answers the poor with justice.

Trusting in God's grace, let us confess our sin.

All: God of glory,

you sent Jesus among us as the light of the world,

to reveal your love for all people.

We confess that our sin and pride

hide the brightness of your light.

We turn away from the poor;

we ignore cries for justice;

we do not strive for peace.

In your mercy, cleanse us of our sin, and pour out the gifts of your Spirit, that, forgiven and renewed, we may show forth your glory shining in the face of Jesus Christ. (Time of silence)

Assurance of Forgiveness

Gail Garrison

Leader: The mercy of the Lord is like rain,

Psalm 72:6

like showers that water the earth.

In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

All: Thanks be to God.

Passing The Peace Gail Garrison

Words of Welcome Rev. Heather Kirk-Davidoff

WE PROCLAIM GOD'S WORD



Prayer for Illumination

One: Holy One, giver of all light, lift up our hearts and minds to Christ, the morning star that never fades. By the light of your Holy Spirit reveal to us your saving Word and lead us to offer our lives to you in service and in love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



Scripture

Matthew 2:1-12

read by Gail Garrison

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east, and have come to pay him homage."

When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet:

'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah, for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'"

Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage."

When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy.

On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Sermon Looking For Patterns Rev. Heather Kirk-Davidoff

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Prayer Hymn #151

We Three Kings

(sing all stanzas; sing refrain only after stanzas 1,4,5)

Gathering Celebrations and Concerns

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.



Invitation to the Offering

Gail Garrison

Rev. Heather Kirk-Davidoff

Offertory Music Cantilena Lionel Lackey

Hymn #607 Doxology

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Christ, all people here below; praise Holy Spirit evermore; Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION



Invitation to Communion

Led by Rev. Heather Kirk-Davidoff & Elder Leah Threatte

The Lord be with you. And also with you. Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life: Blessed are you for the birth of creation.
Blessed are you
in the darkness and the light.
Blessed are you
for your promise to your people.
Blessed are you
in the prophets' hopes and dreams.
Blessed are you
for Mary's openness to your will.
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,
the Word made flesh.

With thanksgiving, we remember how, when the hour had come, Jesus took his place at the table with the apostles. He said to them, I will not eat this Passover again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

Then Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.

After supper, he took a cup, saying, This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.

With this bread and cup
we remember your Word
dwelling among us,
full of grace and truth.
We remember our new birth
in his death and resurrection.
We look with hope for his coming.
All: Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God,
we long for your Spirit.
Come among us.
Bless this meal.
May your Word take flesh in us.
Awaken your people.
Fill us with your light.
Bring the gift of peace on earth.

All: Come, Holy Spirit.

All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**



Sharing Bread and Cup

Hymn #145

What Child Is This



Prayer after Communion

Leader: Loving and gracious God, from east and west, from north and south, you have gathered us at your table, called us your beloved, and fed us from your body. Transform us to be your body in the world, and fortify us by your Spirit, so that we may serve you and our neighbors with great joy. Amen.

WE ARE SENT IN GOD'S NAME



Closing Hymn #127

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (Jesus, the Light of the World)

Benediction Rev. Heather Kirk-Davidoff

Postlude Ce Jour De L'an (This New Year's Day) Thomas Chesterton

HHH

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- For more about Westminster's online communications, please contact us: communications@wpcalbany.org

2025 CHURCH OFFICERS

Session

Leah Threatte, Clerk of Session 2025: Ephraim Adjei, Peter McKee, Linore Southworth 2026: John Bossung, Kate Gallagher, Felicia Kollie-Gambles

Deacons

Mary Bullis and Dodie Seagle, Co-moderators 2025: Kelly Crisfield, Carolyn Smith 2026: Mary Bullis, Marie McClumpha, Dodie Seagle

Trustees

John Bossung and Leif Hartmark, Co-chairs
2025: John Bossung
eta Saagla, Divan Southwarth, Joy L. Tallmadge, Bot

2026: Pete Seagle, Dixon Southworth, Joy L. Tallmadge, Peter Wrede

CHURCH PROGRAM TEAM

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Christopher Price, Music Director music@wpcalbany.org

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Emma Mrowka, Organist organist@wpcalbany.org

CHURCH SUPPORT TEAM

Lorraine Charboneau, Church Administrator office@wpcalbany.org

Kim Deal, Communications Manager communications@wpcalbany.org

Forrest Holroyd, Treasurer treasurer@wpcalbany.org

Joy L. Tallmadge, Associate Sexton

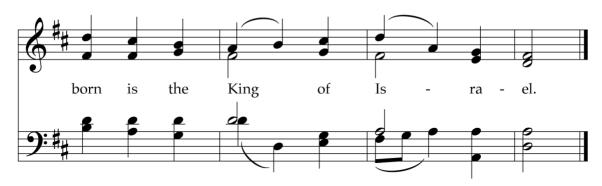
WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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"Nowell" is the English form of the French "noel," a shout of joy formerly used at Christmas (as in Chaucer's "Franklin's Tale"), a clue that the word is older than its first printing. It may have Latin and French roots related to "born" ($natus \mid n\acute{e}$) as well to "news" ($nova \mid nouvelle$).



- and offered there in his presence their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense. Refrain
- 5 Then entered in those wise men three, 6 Then let us all with one accord full reverently upon their knee, and offered there in his presence that hath made heaven and earth of nought, and with his blood our life hath bought. Refrain

151 We Three Kings of Orient Are



Although Christians had begun by the 2nd century to speak of these visitors from eastern countries (Matthew 2:1-12) as "kings," perhaps because of passages like Psalm 72:10 and Isaiah 60:3, it is more accurate to think of them as magi or astrologers, the scholars of their day.

607

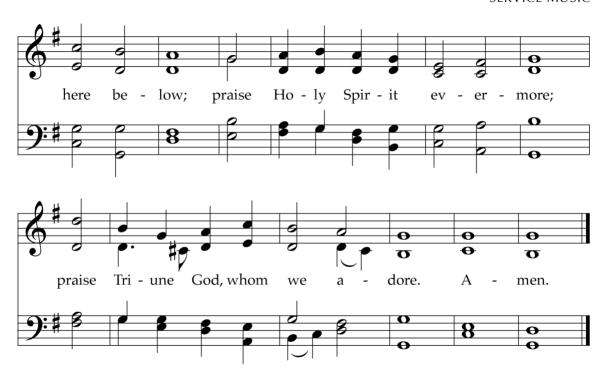
Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

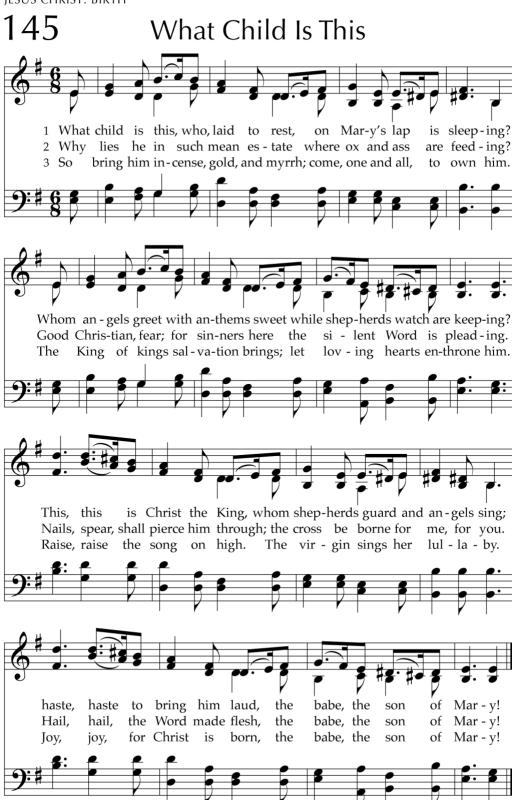
Doxology



TEXT: Neil Weatherhogg, 1988 MUSIC: Genevan Psalter, 1551 Text © 1990 Neil Weatherhogg OLD HUNDREDTH

SERVICE MUSIC





This Victorian text gains scope and power by having the original second halves of stanzas two and three restored. They give a stark forward glimpse of what lies ahead for this "babe, the son of Mary!" The tune is much older, dating from Tudor England.

127 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Jesus, the Light of the World



This blues-tinged setting of a familiar Christmas carol participates in a longstanding African American practice of adapting Anglo-European texts, as is done here by incorporating a repeated internal line and by appending a refrain that expands that line's language and imagery.

