



**WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
Albany, New York  
April 21, 2024 ~ Earth Care Sunday  
Service of Worship 10:00 a.m.



**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.



### **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** Morning in the Garden Lani Smith

**Call to Worship** Judy Hartley

One: The heavens declare the glory of God!

**All : The firmament proclaims God's handiwork.**

One: The plants and trees display God's presence.

**All: Let us join with creation in praising God!**



**Opening Hymn #26** Earth and All Stars!

**Call to Confession** Judy Hartley

Leader: Beloved, we are made in the divine image, and God called us good.

Yet we go our own way, causing harm to ourselves, to one another, and to the planet.

Confident in the mercy of the One who made us and saved us,

let us confess our sin to God to one another.



**Prayer of Confession**

**All: God of life, you created us in your image  
to care for one another and for all creation.**

**Forgive us for turning away from you,  
ignoring the needs of our neighbors  
and the cries of the earth.**

**As the sun brings light and warmth to this earth,  
make us signs of your grace,  
through Christ our light and life, we pray.**

## Declaration of Forgiveness

Judy Hartley

Leader: In the water of baptism God pours out mercy and blessing.  
May we know that we are forgiven, and be at peace as we share that blessing  
with others and care for this good earth, that all creation may share God's glory.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

## Passing The Peace

Judy Hartley

## Words of Welcome

Susan Schell

## Watershed Acknowledgment and Land Acknowledgment

Susan Schell

Although the people assembled virtually here this morning are in various locations, Westminster Presbyterian Church is located in the watershed of the lower Hudson River. We acknowledge that the watershed where we reside is the fundamental ecological grounding for concern about Creation.

We also acknowledge that our church is located on the ancestral lands of the Mahican peoples. The Mahican people were forcibly removed from their homelands in the Hudson and Housatonic River Valleys but still exist today as the Stockbridge-Munsee Community, a federally-recognized Tribal Nation headquartered in Wisconsin. We honor and respect the many diverse indigenous peoples still connected to this land on which we gather. We are grateful to those who lived here before us. We carry responsibility for those who will live here in the future.

## Choral Anthem

Earth Teach Me Stillness

Al Fedak

## WE PROCLAIM GOD'S WORD



### Prayer for Illumination

Dodie Seagle

Living God, with joy we celebrate  
the presence of your risen Word.  
Enliven our hearts by your Holy Spirit  
so that we may proclaim the good news  
of eternal and abundant life;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



### Psalm #23

Dodie Seagle

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.  
He makes me lie down in green pastures;  
he leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul.  
He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.  
Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil;  
for you are with me; your rod and your staff-- they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;  
you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.  
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,  
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long.



**Scripture**

John 10:11-18

Margaret Randall

[Jesus said,] "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own, and my own know me, just as the Father knows me, and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father."

**Sermon**

Earth Sunday: I Am the Good Shepherd

Rev. Gretchen Elmendorf

### **WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD**

**Hymn #715**

The Earth Belongs to God Alone

**Gathering Celebrations and Concerns**

**Prayers from State Street**

Ned Trudeau



**Prayers of Thanksgiving & Intercession**

Rev. Paul Randall

**The Lord's Prayer**

**All: 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.**



**Offering**

Judy Hartley

**Offering Hymn #607**

Doxology

**WE ARE SENT IN GOD'S NAME**



Closing Hymn #713

Touch the Earth Lightly

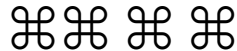
**Benediction**

Rev. Gretchen Elmendorf

**Postlude**

Awake, Awake to Love and Work

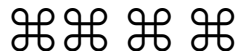
Victor L. Gumma



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- For more about Westminster's online communications, please contact us: [communications@wpcalbany.org](mailto:communications@wpcalbany.org)



**At Westminster Presbyterian Church, we resolve to make every decision regarding supplies, infrastructure and ways of doing everyday business taking into account its impact on the climate and the environment. Cost will not be the sole consideration.**

**We resolve to challenge our congregation and friends of the congregation to continuously be aware that our individual and collective actions can and will make a difference.**

**We resolve to unite with other faith groups to increase awareness and act to address climate change.**

***-Adopted by the Session on August 20, 2021***

## 2024 CHURCH OFFICERS

### Session

*Leah Threatte, Clerk of Session*

2024: Nancy Holroyd, Susan Schell

2025: Ephraim Adjei, Peter McKee, Linore Southworth

2026: John Bossung, Kate Gallagher, Felicia Kollie-Gambles, Nathan Powers

### Deacons

*Mary Bullis and Dodie Seagle, Co-moderators*

2024: Ruthanne Brod, Cynthia Dwyer, Mabel McGraw

2025: Kelly Crisfield, Carolyn Smith

2026: Mary Bullis, Marie McClumpha, Dodie Seagle

### Trustees

*John Bossung, President*

*Dixon Southworth, Vice President*

2024: David Adjei, Leif Hartmark, Laura Moody

2025: John Bossung

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

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Joy L. Tallmadge, Associate Sexton

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# 26 Earth and All Stars!

1 Earth and all stars! Loud rush - ing plan - ets!  
 2 Trum - pet and pipes! Loud clash - ing cym - bals! Sing to the  
 3 En - gines and steel! Loud pound - ing ham - mers!  
 4 Knowl - edge and truth! Loud sound - ing wis - dom!

Lord a new song!  
 Hail, wind, and rain! Loud blow - ing  
 Harp, lute, and lyre! Loud hum - ming  
 Lime - stone and beams! Loud build - ing  
 Daugh - ter and son! Loud pray - ing

snow - storm!  
 cel - los! Sing to the Lord a new song! God has done  
 work - ers!  
 mem - bers!

mar - vel - ous things. We too sing prais - es with a new song!

This lively text was written for the 90th anniversary of St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota. Echoing Psalm 98, it is a prime example of a 20th-century hymn style based on phrases rather than complete sentences. The exuberant tune was created expressly for these words.

# 715 The Earth Belongs to God Alone

1 The earth be - longs to God a - lone; hard  
2 The fer - tile ground through years of toil has  
3 All life be - longs to God a - lone, in  
4 Till God en - dows the earth once more with

clay, rich soil, fine sand. Give thanks wher - ev - er  
cried for Sab - bath rest— a time of peace for  
wil - der - ness and fields. From fal - low land, or  
E - den's state of grace, may we en - deav - or

food is grown on bor - rowed ho - ly land.  
worn - out soil so land can be re - freshed.  
plowed and sown, God gives the good it yields.  
to re - store all land as sa - cred space.

This text emerged from a study of the attention in Levitical laws to the well-being of the land, especially by calling for fallow periods, or “land sabbaths,” to preserve the soil. 2 Chronicles 36:21 even suggests that the Babylonian exile may have resulted from abusing the land.



607

# Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

Doxology

Praise God, from whom all bless-ings flow; praise Christ, all peo-ple

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

OLD HUNDREDTH  
LM

SERVICE MUSIC

here be - low; praise Ho - ly Spir - it ev - er - more;

praise Tri - une God, whom we a - dore. A - men.

# 713 Touch the Earth Lightly

Capo 3: (G) (Dsus) (D) (Em) (Bsus) (Bm)  
 B<sup>b</sup> F<sup>sus</sup> F Gm D<sup>sus</sup> Dm

1 Touch the earth light - ly, use the earth gent - ly,  
 2 We who en - dan - ger, who cre - ate hun - ger,  
 3 Let there be green - ing, birth from the burn - ing,  
 4 God of all liv - ing, God of all lov - ing,

(C) (D7) (G) (Am7) (Dsus) (D)  
 E<sup>b</sup> F7 B<sup>b</sup> Cm7 F<sup>sus</sup> F

nour - ish the life of the world in our care:  
 a - gents of death for all crea - tures that live,  
 wa - ter that bless - es and air that is sweet,  
 God of the seed - ling, the snow, and the sun,

(G) (Dsus) (D) (Em) (Bsus) (Bm)  
 B<sup>b</sup> F<sup>sus</sup> F Gm D<sup>sus</sup> Dm

gift of great won - der, ours to sur - ren - der,  
 we who would fos - ter clouds of di - sas - ter,  
 health in God's gar - den, hope in God's chil - dren,  
 teach us, de - flect us, Christ re - con - nect us,

(C) (G) (Em) (Am7) (D) (G) (G)  
 E<sup>b</sup> B<sup>b</sup> Gm Cm7 F B<sup>b</sup> B<sup>b</sup>

trust for the chil - dren to - mor - row will bear.  
 God of our plan - et, fore - stall and for - give!  
 re - gen - er - a - tion that peace will com - plete.  
 us - ing us gent - ly and mak - ing us one.

An Australian aboriginal saying opens this gentle hymn from New Zealand on the stewardship of creation. "Clouds of disaster" in the second stanza refers to the testing of nuclear devices then occurring in the Pacific Ocean, but the concern for all created things is timeless.