



# WESTMINSTER

— Presbyterian Church —

Albany, New York  
December 1, 2024  
Service of Worship 10:00 AM

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AT WORSHIP  
The First Sunday of Advent



**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**

“Variations on “Veni Emmanuel””

Edward W. Beals (1933-2015)

**Choral Introit** (Hymn #84, “Creator of the Stars of Night”)

Creator of the stars of night,  
Your people's everlasting light,  
O Christ, Redeemer of us all,  
We pray you hear us when we call.

**Advent Candle Liturgy**

Joyce Asuako, Sallar and Nana Afia Kumi-Yeboah

One: In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth,  
And set lights in the sky—sun and moon and stars.  
By these stars, our ancestors charted their journeys.  
By these stars, they knew God was with them.

Two: Today we light one candle to bring the fire of the stars  
down from heaven to earth, to rest among us.  
We name this candle Hope.  
*(The first Advent candle is lit.)*

**Opening Hymn #88**

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

## Call to Confession

John Bossung

We too are on a journey, and we do not always know the way.  
Let us confess our sins before God and one another.



## Prayer of Confession

John Bossung

**All: We lift up our souls to you, O God,  
knowing that we have not always walked closely with you.  
In fact, sometimes we have stopped walking altogether.  
We seem to revisit the same problems over and over  
without really looking for ways to move forward.  
So much in our lives and in our world seems played out and tired.  
Forgive us, God, for our lack of faith in your power and your promises.  
Help us to hope even when things seem hopeless.**

## Assurance of Forgiveness

John Bossung

Listen now to the prayer of an ancient poet:

*Psalms 67:5-8*

“For God alone my soul waits in silence,  
for my hope is from him.  
God alone is my rock and my salvation,  
my fortress; I shall not be shaken.  
On God rests my deliverance and my honor;  
my mighty rock, my refuge is in God.  
Trust in him at all times, O people;  
pour out your heart before him;  
God is a refuge for us.”

Even when better days seem very far away  
and the weight of the world seems to crush any sense of possibility,  
we chart our path by the star of hope,  
trusting in God’s promises.

Let us pray:

Lord Jesus, help us to become the signs of hope that others are searching for.  
As the Advent candle is a glimpse of the light of the heavens,  
help us to be a glimpse of heaven’s hope. Amen.

## Passing The Peace

John Bossung

## Words of Welcome

Rev. Heather Kirk-Davidoff

## Choir Anthem

The Infant King

arr. David Willcocks

**WE PROCLAIM GOD’S WORD**



## Prayer for Illumination

John Bossung

One: Holy God, our hope and strength,  
by the power of your Spirit  
prepare the way in our hearts  
for the coming of your Word,  
so that we may see the glorious signs  
of your promise fulfilled;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



## Scripture Lesson

Luke 3:1-6

read by John Bossung

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord;  
make his paths straight.

Every valley shall be filled,

and every mountain and hill shall be made low,

and the crooked shall be made straight,

and the rough ways made smooth,

and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’ ”

## Sermon

“Not There Yet”

Rev. Heather Kirk-Davidoff

## WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD



Prayer Hymn #103

Come Now, O Prince of Peace (verses 1-4)

## Gathering Celebrations and Concerns

Prayer Hymn #103

Come Now, O Prince of Peace (verses 1 & 2)

## Prayers of the People

Rev. Heather Kirk-Davidoff

## 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.**



Offertory Music

“O Lord of Light, Who Made the Stars’

David N. Johnson (1922-1987)

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

Rev. Heather Kirk-Davidoff and Elder Linore Southworth



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.**

How can we thank you, O God?  
for sun and moon and stars;  
for breath and life and all things good;  
for your steadfast promise and your faithful love;  
for the day that is surely coming  
when all things will be made new.

With saints, with angels, and with the whole creation,  
we join the ancient and eternal hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

We give you thanks, Holy God, for Jesus,  
who came to be your living Word,  
to baptize us with Spirit and fire,  
to feed the hungry, to humble the mighty,  
and to announce the good news of your coming realm.

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 thanks and praise we offer ourselves to you,  
sharing this holy meal,  
remembering Christ's dying and rising,  
and praying: **Come, Lord Jesus!**

Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us—  
this bread, this cup, these people—  
Christ's body and blood,  
given in love for the world.

**Make us one in the Spirit,  
one in the church,  
and one with Christ our Lord.**

Make us gentle, joyful, thankful people,  
serving our neighbors, worshiping you alone.  
Keep us in the peace of Christ  
until you gather us at your table in glory.

**Even now, a voice is crying in the wilderness:  
prepare the way of the Lord!**

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all glory and honor are yours, almighty God,  
now and forever. **Amen.**



## Sharing Bread and Cup



### Prayer after Communion

Leader: Mighty God, holy is your name.

We thank you for gathering us at your table  
and feeding us with the bread of life.

**All: As we leave this table  
to go to the many places where you call us,  
send your Spirit to accompany us,  
so that we may share in your magnificent work:  
lifting up those who are laid low,  
showing mercy to all in need of human kindness,  
and feeding the bodies and hearts  
of all those who are hungry. Amen.**

### WE ARE SENT IN GOD'S NAME



Hymn #744

Arise, Your Light Is Come!

Charge and Benediction

Rev. Heather Kirk-Davidoff

Hymn #92 (verse 1)

While We are Waiting Come

**While we are waiting, come; while we are waiting, come.  
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.**

Postlude

“Wake, Awake, for Night is Flying”

Johann Gottfried Walther (1684-1748)

### AFTER WORSHIP THIS MORNING: THE HANGING OF THE GREENS

Please stay for a bit after worship and help us decorate our sanctuary for the Advent season. Adults and children are welcome! There are heavy jobs (assembling our big Christmas trees) and light jobs (decorating a tree with chrismons) and everything in between. We'll have coffee, tea and some Christmas cookies on hand to sweeten the work!

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## 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*

2024: David Adjei, Leif Hartmark, Laura Moody

2025: John Bossung

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

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# 84 Creator of the Stars of Night



1 Cre - a - tor of the stars of night, your peo - ple's ev - er -  
 2 When this old world drew on toward night, you came; but not in  
 3 At your great name, O Je - sus, now all knees must bend, all  
 4 To God the Fa - ther, God the Son, and God the Spir - it,

The Latin original of this text for Advent dates from at least the 9th century, and the English version was created a millennium later as part of the 19th-century recovery of early Christian hymns. It is provided here with its traditional plainchant setting.

TEXT: Latin hymn, 9th cent.; trans. John Mason Neale, 1851; as in *The Hymnal 1940*, alt.  
 MUSIC: Sarum plainsong, Mode IV, 9th cent.; harm. Alfred V. Fedak, 2011  
 Text Alt. © 1940 Church Pension Fund  
 Music Harm. © 2011 Alfred V. Fedak

CONDITOR ALME SIDERUM  
 LM  
 (alternate tune: PUER NOBIS NASCITUR)

## JESUS CHRIST: ADVENT



last - ing light, O Christ, re - deem - er of us all,  
 splen - dor bright, not as a mon - arch, but the child  
 hearts must bow: all things on earth with one ac - cord,  
 Three in One, praise, hon - or, might, and glo - ry be



we pray you, hear us when we call.  
 of Mar - y, blame - less moth - er mild.  
 like those in heaven, shall call you Lord.  
 from age to age e - ter - nal - ly. A - men.

# 88 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som  
 2 O come, thou Wis - dom from on high, who or - derest  
 3 O come, O come, thou Lord of might, who to thy  
 4 O come, thou Root of Jes - se, free thine own from



cap - tive Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile  
 all things might - i - ly: to us the path of knowl - edge  
 tribes on Si - nai's height in an - cient times didst give the  
 Sa - tan's tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell thy peo - ple



here un - til the Son of God ap - pear.  
 show; and teach us in her ways to go. Re-joyce! Re-joyce!  
 law in cloud and maj - es - ty and awe.  
 save and give them vic - tory o'er the grave.



Em - man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>5 O come, thou Key of David, come,<br/>             and open wide our heavenly home;<br/>             make safe the way that leads on high,<br/>             and close the path to misery.<br/>             Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel<br/>             shall come to thee, O Israel.</p>             | <p>6 O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer<br/>             our spirits by thine advent here;<br/>             disperse the gloomy clouds of night,<br/>             and death's dark shadows put to flight.<br/>             Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel<br/>             shall come to thee, O Israel.</p> |
| <p>7 O come, Desire of nations, bind<br/>             all peoples in one heart and mind;<br/>             bid envy, strife, and discord cease;<br/>             fill the whole world with heaven's peace.<br/>             Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel<br/>             shall come to thee, O Israel.</p> |  |

One stanza of this paraphrase of the great O Antiphons may be sung on each of the last days of Advent as follows:

- |                              |                                  |                         |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Dec. 17: O Wisdom (2)        | Dec. 20: O Key of David (5)      | Dec. 23: O Emmanuel (1) |
| Dec. 18: O Lord of might (3) | Dec. 21: O Dayspring (6)         |                         |
| Dec. 19: O Root of Jesse (4) | Dec. 22: O Desire of Nations (7) |                         |

These titles of the coming Christ appeared in daily Vesper antiphons sung during the week before Christmas; their roots date at least to the reign of Charlemagne. Both text and tune are the fruit of 19th-century efforts to reclaim Christian treasures from pre-Reformation sources.

# 103 Come Now, O Prince of Peace

오소서

1 Come now, O Prince of Peace; make us one bod - y.  
2 Come now, O God of love; make us one bod - y.  
3 Come now and set us free, O God, our Sav - ior.  
4 Come, hope of u - ni - ty; make us one bod - y.

Come, O Lord Je - sus; rec-on-cile all peo - ple.

## KOREAN

- 1 오소서 오소서 평화의 임금  
우리가 한몸 이루게 하소서
- 2 오소서 오소서 사랑의 임금  
우리가 한몸 이루게 하소서
- 3 오소서 오소서 자유의 임금  
우리가 한몸 이루게 하소서
- 4 오소서 오소서 통일의 임금  
우리가 한몸 이루게 하소서

Originally created for a 1988 world conference for the peace and reunification of the Korean peninsula, these four stanzas centering on peace, love, freedom, and unity demonstrate how texts for particular situations can become hymns that speak deeply to shared human longings.

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.

# Come, Come Emmanuel

91

Come, come Em - man - u - el. Come, Em -

The first system of music is in G major and 3/4 time. The vocal line (treble clef) begins with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and then a half note G4-A4. The piano accompaniment (bass clef) starts with a half note G3, followed by a half note A3, and then a half note G3-A3. The lyrics are: "Come, come Em - man - u - el. Come, Em -".

man - u - el. man - u - el.

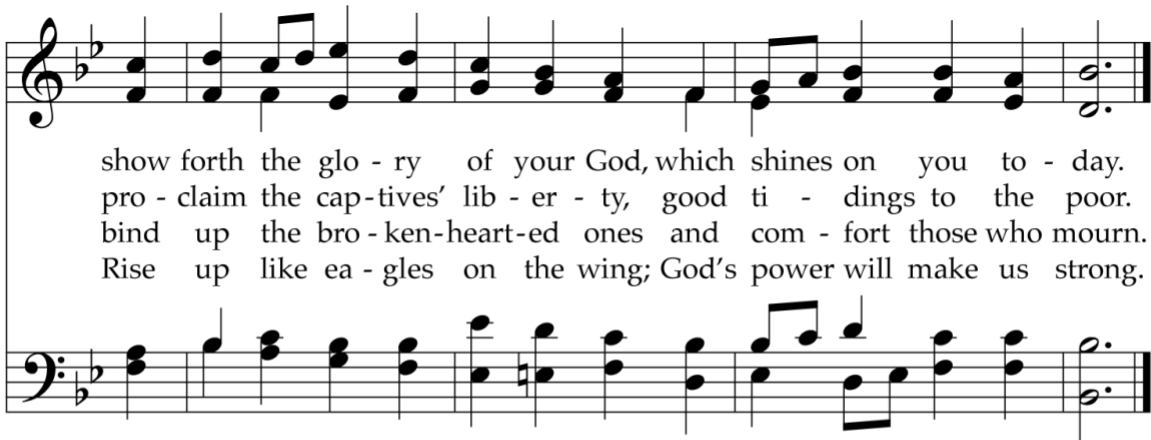
The second system of music is in G major and 3/4 time. It is divided into two parts: "For repeat" and "Final ending". The vocal line (treble clef) begins with a half note G4, followed by a half note A4, and then a half note G4-A4. The piano accompaniment (bass clef) starts with a half note G3, followed by a half note A3, and then a half note G3-A3. The lyrics are: "man - u - el. man - u - el.".

This Advent refrain centers on the name of Jesus meaning "God with us" (Matthew 1:23, quoting Isaiah 7:14). Intended for repeated congregational singing, it can be expanded by the addition of stanzas sung by a soloist or choir, or it can serve effectively as a prayer response.

# 744 Arise, Your Light Is Come!



1 A - rise, your light is come! The Spir - it's call o - bey;  
2 A - rise, your light is come! Fling wide the pris - on door;  
3 A - rise, your light is come! All you in sor - row born,  
4 A - rise, your light is come! The moun - tains burst in song!



show forth the glo - ry of your God, which shines on you to - day.  
pro - claim the cap - tives' lib - er - ty, good ti - dings to the poor.  
bind up the bro - ken - heart - ed ones and com - fort those who mourn.  
Rise up like ea - gles on the wing; God's power will make us strong.

Echoing imagery from Isaiah 61:1–2 and other passages, this text was created as an inclusive-language alternative to an older hymn using this late 19th-century tune. Because it is a song of encouragement rather than a song of praise, it is not directed to God but to people.

# 92 While We Are Waiting, Come

1 While we are wait - ing, come;  
2 With power and glo - ry, come;  
3 Come, Sav - ior, quick - ly come;

while we are wait - ing, come.  
with power and glo - ry, come.  
come, Sav - ior, quick - ly come.

Je - sus, our Lord, Em - man - u - el,

while we are wait - ing, come.

This simple and meditative Advent hymn is so uncomplicated in both text and tune that it can be learned quickly and sung without reference to a book, which might make it effective as a prayer response. It would also lend itself to improvised stanzas on appropriate occasions.