



# WESTMINSTER

— Presbyterian Church —

Albany, New York  
December 8, 2024  
Service of Worship 10:00 AM

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AT WORSHIP  
The Second 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**

Lo! How a Rose e'er Blooming

James Denton

**Advent Candle Liturgy**

Jessica Chamberlain & Shernette Grant

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 two candles 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.)*  
We name this candle Peace. *(The second Advent candle is lit.)*

**Opening Hymn #82**

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

**Call to Confession**

Beth Coombe

One: 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

**All: Loving God, we lift our reluctant hearts to you.  
 We know that we hold tight to patterns of behavior  
 and patterns of thought that are familiar,  
 even when we know they are harmful to others and to ourselves.  
 We harbor grudges.  
 We hold onto resentments.  
 We cultivate our fears.  
 Enliven us, we pray, with your compassion,  
 for others and for our own selves.  
 Breathe your Holy Spirit into us  
 that we may be stirred to walk in new ways  
 and open ourselves to new insights.  
 Let your face shine upon us.  
 Teach us to love!**

## Assurance of Forgiveness

Beth Coombe

Listen now to the plea of the apostle Paul: *(Philippians 4:6-7)*  
 “Do not be anxious about anything,  
 but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving,  
 present your requests to God.  
 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding,  
 will guard your hearts and your minds  
 in Christ Jesus.”

We chart our path by the star of peace.  
 Even when violence and fear are raging  
 and peace seems like a pipedream,  
 we set our face steadily towards the light.

Let us pray:

**All: Lord Jesus, as we search for signs of peace this week,  
 help us to *become* the signs of peace that others are searching for.  
 As these candles are but a glimpse of the light of the heavens,  
 help us to be a glimpse of heaven’s peace. Amen.**

## Passing The Peace

Beth Coombe

## Words of Welcome

Beth Coombe

## Piano Solo

“Awake, the Voice Commands”

Johann Sebastian Bach

**WE PROCLAIM GOD’S WORD**



### Prayer for Illumination

Beth Coombe

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 1:26-38

read by Beth Coombe

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary.

And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God."

Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

### Story

"Anticipation"

Nancy Marie Payne

### WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD



Prayer Hymn #84

Creator of the Stars of Night

### Gathering Celebrations and Concerns

Leah Threatte

### Prayers of the People

Leah Threatte

### 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.**



## Invitation to the Offering

Beth Coombe

Offertory Music

Offertory on "Resonet in Laudibus"

David Paxton

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.**

### WE ARE SENT IN GOD'S NAME



Hymn #107

Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn

Benediction

Beth Coombe

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

Prepare the Royal Highway

James Mansfield



**We welcome Nancy Marie Payne to our pulpit this morning!** With over 40 years teaching experience and over 12 years as a professional storyteller, Nancy specializes in researching and creating commissioned historical pieces. Nancy has performed and led workshops in schools, libraries, historical societies, museums and storytelling and writing conferences including Albany's First Night, Story Sundays at the Glen Sanders Mansion, Word Plays at Proctors, the Clearwater Festival, and Underground Railroad conferences. Nancy is a member of the Story Circle of the Capital District.



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## Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus 82

1 Come, thou long - ex - pect - ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo - ple free;  
2 Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child and yet a king,

from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.  
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king - dom bring.

Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art;  
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it rule in all our hearts a - lone;

dear de - sire of ev - ery na - tion, joy of ev - ery long - ing heart.  
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

With its opening "Come," this hymn sounds the note of entreaty and invitation that characterizes the Advent season (from the Latin *adventus* = "coming"). Its blending of memory and hope helps us to give voice to our present faith as we stand between the past and the future.

# 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.

CONDITOR ALME SIDERUM

MUSIC: Sarum plainsong, Mode IV, 9th cent.; harm. Alfred V. Fedak, 2011

LM

Text Alt. © 1940 Church Pension Fund

(alternate tune: PUER NOBIS NASCITUR)

Music Harm. © 2011 Alfred V. Fedak

## 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.



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.

# 107 Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn



1 A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, for an - gels  
 2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em - man - u -  
 3 In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, when all the  
 4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night. Though dark the



her - ald its dawn - ing. Sing out your joy, for soon he is  
 el comes a - sing - ing; his hum - ble song is qui - et and  
 world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so qui - et and  
 win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall crown you with



born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing. Come as a ba - by  
 near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing; mu - sic to heal the  
 free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing. Then shall the mute break  
 light; be strong and lov - ing and fear - less. Love be our song and



weak and poor, to bring all hearts to - geth - er, he o - pens  
 bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing - kind - ness. The thun - der  
 forth in song, the lame shall leap in won - der, the weak be  
 love our prayer and love our end - less sto - ry; may God fill



wide the heaven - ly door and lives now in - side us for - ev - er.  
 of his an - thems rolls to shat - ter all ha - tred and vio - lence.  
 raised a - bove the strong, and weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.  
 ev - ery day we share and bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

After attending a carol concert, the author and composer of this hymn was moved to create a contemporary, accessible carol that drew on the familiar images in a new way. There are echoes here of passages such as Isaiah 9:6, Isaiah 7:14/Matthew 1:23, Isaiah 35:5-6, Isaiah 2:4.

# 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.