

# The Lord's Service

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*The Fourth Sunday of Advent*

DECEMBER 22, 2024



Westminster Presbyterian Church

POST TENEBRAS LUX

PRELUDE

*Comfort, Comfort Ye My People  
Air from "The Water Music"*

GOUDIMEL / J. S. BACH  
G. F. HANDEL

*Please use the prelude as a time of silent preparation for the worship of the Triune God.*

GREETING

The Lord be with you.  
**And also with you.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE



CALL TO WORSHIP

LUKE 1:45-53

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

**For he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name.**

His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

**He has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. Amen!**



PRAYER OF THE DAY

O Wisdom, coming forth from the mouth of the Most High, pervading and permeating all creation, you order all things with strength and gentleness: Come now and teach us the way to salvation. Come, Lord Jesus. **Amen.**



HYMN OF PRAISE

*O Come, All Ye Faithful*

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CONFESSION OF SINS

**God of the future, you are coming in power to bring all nations under your rule. We confess that we have not expected your kingdom, for we live casual lives, ignoring your promised judgment. We accept lies as truth, exploit neighbors, abuse the earth, and refuse your justice and peace. In your mercy, forgive us. Grant us wisdom to welcome your way, and to seek things that will endure when Christ comes to judge the world. In Jesus' name. Amen.**

THE KYRIE ELEISON

*Lord, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy upon us.*

ASSURANCE OF PARDON



RESPONSIVE READING OF THE LAW FROM THE PSALMS

God spoke all these words, saying; I am the Lord your God, you shall have no other gods before me.

**Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done that which is evil in thy sight.**

You shall not make for yourself graven images...you shall not bow down to them or serve them.

**O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker! For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.**

You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

**O Lord, open thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth thy praise.**

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. **How lovely is thy dwelling place, O Lord of hosts! For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.**

Honor your father and your mother. **Remember not the sins of my youth, or my transgressions; according to thy steadfast love remember me, for thy goodness' sake, O Lord!**

You shall not kill.

**Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any wicked way in me.**

You shall not commit adultery. **Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.**

You shall not steal. **Have mercy on me, O God, and blot out my transgressions.**

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. **Put false ways far from me; and graciously teach me thy law!**

You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant, or his maidservant, or his ox, or his ass, or anything that is your neighbor's. **Incline my heart to thy testimonies, and not to gain! Deliver me from all my transgressions.**

The Lord is near to all who call upon him, to all who call upon him in truth. He fulfills the desire of all who fear him, he also hears their cry, and saves them. **My mouth will speak the praise of the Lord, and let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever.**



THE PEACE



GLORIA PATRI

735

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, amen.*

INTERLUDE

*How Brightly Shines the Morning Star*

HARM. J.S. BACH

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

God, source of all light, by your Word you give light to the soul. Pour out upon us the spirit of wisdom and understanding that, being taught by you in Holy Scripture, our hearts and minds may be opened to know the things that pertain to life and holiness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

OLD TESTAMENT READING

ISAIAH 8:22-9:2

NEW TESTAMENT READING

ROMANS 13:8-14

⌘ PSALM OF RESPONSE: PSALM 24      *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates*      198

⌘ GOSPEL READING      MATTHEW 4:12-17

⌘ RESPONSE

The Word of the Lord.  
**Praise be to God.**

SERMON

*“The Blunt Edge of Christmas”*

⌘ THE APOSTLES’ CREED

**I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

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

PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE

OFFERTORY

*Ave Maria*

FRANZ LISZT

⌘ DOXOLOGY      731

***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, amen.***

⌘ SURSUM CORDA

Lift up your hearts.  
**We lift them up to the Lord.**  
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

⌘ PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

⌘ 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.**

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Andrew & Helena Eksuzian

ADMINISTRATION OF MEMBERSHIP VOWS

Kristin Eksuzian, Jeff & Jen Yao

THE COMMUNION

*(Outer ring alone is grape juice)*

COMMUNION HYMN

*Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness*

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*Soul, adorn yourself with gladness,  
leave the gloomy haunts of sadness,  
come into the daylight's splendor,  
there with joy your praises render.  
Bless the One whose grace unbounded  
this amazing banquet founded;  
he, though heavenly, high and holy,  
deigns to dwell with you most lowly.*

*Now in faith I humbly ponder  
over this surpassing wonder  
that the bread of life is boundless,  
though the souls it feeds are countless;*

*with the choicest wine of heaven  
Christ's own blood to us is given.  
Oh, most glorious consolation,  
pledge and seal of my salvation.*

*Jesus, source of lasting pleasure,  
truest friend and dearest treasure,  
peace beyond all understanding,  
joy into all life expanding:  
humbly now, I bow before you,  
love incarnate, I adore you;  
worthily let me receive you,  
and, so favored, never leave you.*

⌘ HYMN OF DEPARTURE

*Hark! the Herald Angels Sing*

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⌘ CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

⌘ POSTLUDE

*Trumpet Voluntary in D*

HENRY PURCELL / ED. E. POWER BRIGGS

MINISTER: Rev. Justin Chiarot

WORSHIP LEADER: Bob Maucher

ORGANIST: Elaine H. Simpson, D.M.A.

TRUMPETER: Zachary Hommel

## Quotes of the Week

“Midnight, Christians, is the solemn hour, When God as man descended unto us To erase the stain of original sin, And to end the wrath of His Father. The entire world thrills with hope On this night that gives it a Savior.”

~ **Placide Chapeau**, *O Holy Night (Cantique de Noel)*

“In the end, the plague touched us all. It was not confined to the Oran of Camus. No. It turned up again in America, breeding in-a-compost of greed and uselessness and murder, in those places where statesmen and generals stash the bodies of the forever young. The plague ran in the blood of men in sharkskin suits, who ran for president promising life and delivering death. The infected young men machine-gunned babies in Asian ditches; they marshalled metal death through the mighty clouds, up above God’s green earth, released it in silent streams, and moved on, while the hospitals exploded and green fields were churned to mud.” ~ **Pete Hamill**

“This is the excellent foppery of the world, that when we are sick in fortune (often the surfeits of our own behavior) we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and stars, as if we were villains on necessity; fools by heavenly compulsion; knaves, thieves, and treachers by spherical predominance; drunkards, liars, and adulterers by an enforced obedience of planetary influence; and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on. An admirable evasion of whoremaster man, to lay his goatish disposition on the charge of a star! My father compounded with my mother under the Dragon’s tail, and my nativity was under Ursa Major, so that it follows I am rough and lecherous. Fut, I should have been that I am, had the maidenliest star in the firmament twinkled on my bastardizing.” **William Shakespeare**, *King Lear* (Act 1, Scene 2, Lines 112–125)

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# Missions Work Highlight

## THE BALKAN CENTER FOR LIFE

Formerly known as the Lydia Center, The Balkan Center for Life is located in Macedonia. The goal of the ministry is to change the cultural concepts surrounding abortion and adoption in the Balkans. It is dedicated to counseling and helping women while promoting the value of life and the rights of the unborn baby. Svetlana Jovanova is the Founder and CEO of The Balkan Center for Life and is now the Director. She is LAS certified by Heartbeat International and is certified as a reproductive loss trainer for the Institute of Reproductive Grief Care.

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## Prayer Requests

**Families of the Month:** Claire Clason, Clement family, Coleman family, Conklin family

**Weekly Prayer Focus:** Eton Gayle (Cancer), Mary McCorvey (cancer), Susan Roosje (hospice), Jeanne Phillips (James's mother, limited responsiveness), Megan Brossman (mental health)

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## Announcements

It is our joy to receive Andrew and Kristin Eksuzian along with Jeff and Jen Yao into membership at Westminster and to celebrate the baptisms of Andrew and Helena Eksuzian.

Weekly tithing envelopes for 2025 are now available. Please reach out to the church office if you would like a pack.

Please join us for our Christmas Eve Candlelight service on Tuesday, 12/24 at 7:00pm.

The Christmas Eve offering will be sent to the ministry of the PCA to assist church workers in need.

## WELCOME TO WESTMINSTER

Westminster Church is both a place and a people. We gather in this sacred space to worship, to learn, and to serve God as he meets us in Christ. To this end we dedicate our time, our talent, and our resources. Here the Gospel of Christ is freely proclaimed: *We are weaker and more sinful than we ever dared admit, but through Christ we are more loved and accepted than we ever dared hope.* As a community of Christians, we are building a bridge to the future through faith and friendship. To this end, we pray God will give us strength, vision, and wisdom. We are thankful that you could join with us today. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Welcome to Westminster!

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### Westminster Stated Services

Worship	10:00AM
Sunday School ( <i>Sept–June</i> )	11:45 AM
Sunday Evening Service	6:00 PM

### Christ's Church of the Hudson Valley

Worship	10:30 AM
Sunday School	12:00 PM

### Church & Office Location

560 Station Road  
Rock Tavern, NY 12575

T 845.496.7971 | F 845.496.7916  
[www.westminsterchurch-ny.org](http://www.westminsterchurch-ny.org)  
[office@westminsterchurch-ny.org](mailto:office@westminsterchurch-ny.org)

### Cover

The Celtic cross reminds us, as Presbyterians, of our historical roots in the British Isles dating back at least to the fifth century. *Post Tenebras Lux* is a Latin slogan from the 16th-century Protestant Reformation meaning *After Darkness, Light*. The cross and the slogan combine to express our desire to be rooted in the ancient faith and to embrace the attainments of the Protestant Reformation.

Westminster was organized in 1854 and is affiliated with the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA).

### Senior Pastor

Rev. Kevin Chiarot, Ph.D.

### Assistant Pastor

Rev. Justin Chiarot

### Session (Ruling Elders, with Class Year)

Robert David (2025), Gary Berg (2025),  
Mike Bonagura (2026), James Phillips (2026),  
Ron Bonagura (2027), Bob Maucher (2027)

### Board of Deacons (with Class Year)

Joe Hall (Chair: 2025), Bill Cooke (2025),  
Ed Timberger (2025), David Babick (2026),  
Noah Watson (2026), John Grammer (2027),  
Ethan Westlund (2027)

### Board of Trustees

Robert David (Chairman)  
Adam Kuliszewski (Vice-Chairman)

### Staff

Administrative Secretary	Jo-Anne Weber
Christian Education	Brenda Grammer
Evangelism	Gary Berg
Fellowship	JoAnn Maucher
Music Committee	Lori Steinberger
Organist	Elaine H. Simpson
Property Manager	Joe Schlegel
Sexton	Rachel McDuffie
Treasurer	Kevin Quirk

