



Westminster Presbyterian Church

*We are called to be and to make disciples
who love God and who love our neighbors.*

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 21, 2025

11:00 a.m.

*Please greet each other warmly as the congregation gathers for worship.
Take a moment and sign the friendship register.*

PRELUDE

Of the Fathers Love Begotten

GILBERT MARTIN

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Moment for Mission

◆ SONG OF PREPARATION NO. 137

He Came Down

HE CAME DOWN

He came down that we may have love;
he came down that we may have love;
he came down that we may have love;
hallelujah forevermore.

◆ LIGHTING THE CANDLE OF LOVE

The Winkles Family

One: In a world full of fear, where do you see the presence of love?

All: We see love all around us. We see love when people hold open the door. We see love in a warm embrace, a homemade casserole, a phone call after a long day. We see love in random acts of kindness and intentional acts of empathy. We see love all around us.

One: Even in a fearful world, love is all around us.

All: Today we light the candle of love as a reminder of this good news.

May this flicker of light help us remember that even in a fearful world, love is here.
We only have to look for it.

The Candle of Love is lighted.

One: Thanks be to God!

All: Amen.

◆ HYMN OF PRAISE NO. 110

Love Has Come

BRING A TORCH

◆ PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Loving God, we long to feel you close.
We long to feel your presence in our lives.
We long for you to break through the chaos and suffering of this world.
However, if we're honest, we rarely stand still long enough to feel you in our midst.
Forgive our rushing and distractions.
Forgive our wandering hearts, and center us in this space.
Remind us that even in the days of waiting,
even on the longest nights, you are always there. Amen.

-Silent Personal Confession-

◆ ASSURANCE OF GOD'S PARDON

One: Family of faith, even when we doubt God's presence,
even when we fail to notice God's fingerprints in this world,
God is always moving closer to us.
Hear and believe the good news this Advent season:

All: **Nothing can keep God's love away.**
We are seen. We are forgiven. We are not alone. Amen.

◆ SONG OF RESPONSE

Gloria!

Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

◆ SHARING CHRIST'S PEACE

One: The peace of Christ be with you!

All: **And also with you!**

Please share the peace of Christ with your neighbor

TIME FOR CHILDREN TO SHINE

Claire Winkles

*Following Children's Time, children ages 2-3K (Wee Church) and 4-5 K (Children's Church)
will gather in the narthex with adult leaders and then be led to the Children's Building.
Parents may pick them up following the service.*

ANTHEM

Christmas Lullaby
Sanctuary Choir

JOHN RUTTER

Clear in the darkness a light shines in Bethlehem: angels are singing, their sound fills the air. Wise men have journeyed to meet their Messiah, but only a mother and baby lie there. 'Ave Maria', hear the soft lullaby the angel hosts sing. 'Ave Maria', maiden and mother of Jesus, our King. Where are his courtiers, and who are his people? Why does he bear neither sceptre nor crown? Shepherds his courtiers, the poor for his people, with peace as his sceptre and love for his crown. What, though your treasures are not gold or incense? Lay them before him with hearts full of love. Praise to the Christ child and praise to his mother, who bore us a Saviour with grace from above.

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Matthew 1:18-25

PEW BIBLE N.T. PAGE 1

SERMON

What Do You Fear: The Angel Visits Joseph

◆ HYMN OF RESPONSE NO. 123

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

CAROL

◆ AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We have seen the valley. We have seen a sky without stars.
We have seen the longest night, and *still* we believe.
We believe in a with-us God. We believe in the hope of tomorrow.
We believe that good news is louder than fear.
We believe this good news is for all people.
So even when our knees shake, even when our voice trembles,
even when fear is all around us, we will hold onto that good news.
We will reach for each other. We will look for God in our midst.
We will sing songs of joy. We will proclaim: *Unto us, love is born.*
We have seen the longest night, and we have seen unimaginable love.
So *still*, we believe. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND 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.

◆ HYMN NO. 132

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

IN DULCI JUBILO

◆ BENEDICTION AND RESPONSE

We sing together:

**Emmanuel, Emmanuel, His name is called Emmanuel;
God with us, revealed to us; His name is called Em-man-u-el!**

◆ POSTLUDE

Est ist ein Ros entsprungen

JOHAMMES BRAHMS

Portions of today's liturgy are created by Rev. Sarah Are Speed; Sanctified Art

◆ *Please stand, if able*

LEADING THE SERVICE TODAY:

Daniel Smoak, Pastor; Priscilla Holtzclaw, Parish Associate;
Claire Winkles, Director of Youth & Children's Ministries;
Sarah Shayban, Director of Music

Acolytes: Eleanor Christian, John Christian

Children's Church: Catherine Morgan, Caroline Christian

Wee Church: Margaret and James Head

Ushers: Betsy McLaughlin, Derek McLaughlin, Martha Adams, Lou Bowers, John Dounian

11:00 Livestream at www.wpccharleston.org, YouTube (Westminster Presbyterian Charleston)

Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service obtained from CCLI License #2778901

*The rosebud in the sanctuary is given to the glory of God in celebration of the birth
of Blake Alice Hartigan, born December 10, 2025 to parents Cory and Alexis Hartigan.
Mark and Tracy Friedrichs are proud grandparents.*

WELCOME TO WORSHIP! ALL ARE WELCOME

We are called to be and to make disciples who love God and who love our neighbors. We are all neighbors no matter our age, race, language, culture, gifts and challenges, gender identity, or sexual orientation. We strive to be a safe and supportive community where all people are included, celebrated, and loved as we grow as disciples together.

WELCOME TO WORSHIP! LET US KNOW YOU'RE HERE

Please take a moment to sign and pass the Friendship Register in the pews. If you are visiting and wish to learn more about Westminster, leave your contact information. If you are interested in becoming a member, check 'wish to join' and a pastor will be in touch with you.

LET'S GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER Name tags are available on the name tag cart in the Narthex. Please find yours and wear it on Sunday mornings, returning it before you leave. If yours is missing, please use a sticky badge and put your name on the 'I need a name tag' form.

PRAYER REQUEST?

Leave your written requests in the basket next to the main sanctuary doors. WPC staff will pray for your request at our weekly meeting and throughout the week.

WAYS TO GIVE TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Church Pew Envelope: Place cash or check in the Pew Envelope and drop it in the Offering Plate in the narthex.

Online: Click the "Give Now" button in the top right of our homepage wpccharleston.org. Text: "charlestonwpc" to 73256.

Thank you for giving.

IS GOD CALLING YOU TO JOIN THE WESTMINSTER FAMILY?

Here's how you can do it. Fill out a New Member Form and put it in the offering plate in the narthex. Forms are available at the Hospitality Table in the narthex, or you may fill one out online under the visitor tab at wpccharleston.org or using the QR code. One of our pastors or someone from the Membership Committee will quickly be in touch, providing an opportunity individually or with a group to learn more about the church. On a Sunday morning, you'll attend a meeting with the Session for reception into membership. We'll handle paperwork if you're transferring from another church or arrange baptism if you've never been baptized. That same Sunday morning, you'll be introduced to the congregation during worship. Questions? Speak with an usher or one of our pastors following the service.



ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS WORSHIP AT WESTMINSTER

What Do You Fear? An Advent and Christmas Sermon Series

December 21: The Fourth Sunday of Advent

Matthew 1:18-25 The Angel Visits Joseph: When You're Afraid, Give Me Your Hand

December 24: Christmas Eve

3:00 & 5:00 Two options to attend a Service for Families with Young Children. We recreate the nativity with help from the congregation and all the children who wish to participate. Come about 10 minutes early to choose from the costumes provided; it's wiggly and wonderful.

7:00 Carols and Candlelight. A more reverent service with traditional carols, a sermon, and candle lighting. *Luke 2:1- The Angels Declare a Good News that Is Louder Than Fear.*

December 28: One worship service at 10:00. No Sunday School.

Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23 Fleeing to Egypt: Let Fear Fuel a Fire for Justice

January 4: One worship service at 10:00. No Sunday School.

Matthew 2:1-12, 16-18 The Magi: Fear Doesn't Stop Us

READ GOOD BOOKS IN 2025!

Today we'll discuss Fleming Rutledge's *Advent*. In her collection of writings and sermons, Rutledge will help us get ready. As the midnight of the Christian year, the season of Advent is rife with dark, gritty realities. In this book, with her trademark wit and wisdom, Rutledge explores Advent as a time of rich paradoxes, a season celebrating at once Christ's incarnation and his second coming, and she masterfully unfolds the ethical and future-oriented significance of Advent for the church. We'll read prescribed portions of the book in preparation for discussion today at 4:00. Books are \$25 and available in the narthex.

JOIN US FOR WONDERFUL WEDNESDAY!

We will pause Wonderful Wednesday for the remainder of December and resume our dinner and fellowship on Wednesday, January 7th. See you then!

WESTMINSTER WEEKLY E-NEWS

Be sure to check out the weekly e-news (and WPC website) to stay up to date on all the upcoming church events!

BLOOD MOBILE AT WESTMINSTER

On Wednesday, January 7, from 12:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m., the Blood Mobile will be in the Westminster parking lot so you can provide a life saving donation of blood to the American Red Cross. Schedule your appointment online at <https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/drive-results?zipSponsor=Westminster> or scan the QR code below.



COLD WEATHER CLOTHING & RAIN GEAR DRIVE FOR MARY FORD STUDENTS

Westminster is collecting cold-weather and rainy-weather clothing for the students and families of Mary Ford Early Childhood Education Center. Most families at Mary Ford live at or below the poverty level, making it difficult to purchase warm or protective clothing. Students range in age from 2 to 6 years old and typically wear sizes XS-M.

A collection box will be placed in the Narthex through **May 1**. Each time the box is filled, items will be delivered to the school and distributed by the Parent Advocate.

Requested items include:

- *Cold weather:* long pants, sweaters, long-sleeve shirts, coats, jackets, hats, gloves, scarves, mittens, long socks
- *Rain gear:* raincoats, rain hats, rain boots

While new clothing is preferred, gently used items (clean, with no holes or stains) are welcome.

Mary Ford also maintains a clothing closet for siblings and parents. Donations of clean adult clothing—as well as shoes and belts—are also appreciated.

Help support these families during difficult times by donating new or gently used items. Thank you for your generosity!

PRESCHOOL NEWS

January 5, 2026, Preschool Registration for the 2026-2027 school year will begin. Registration will open to our current families and members of the Church. Then on February 2, 2026, registration will open to the Public. Interested families can contact the Preschool Office for more information and to take a tour of the school.

2025 YEAR END GIVING

As we approach the end of the church's fiscal year, please be aware that the church books will close December 31, 2025. In order to be recorded for 2025, all contributions will need to be received by December 31. You can mail your check, bring to the church office, or take advantage of the safe and convenient online giving. Thank you for your faithful and generous support of the missions and ministry of Westminster. 2025 Giving Statements can be accessed through your online Realm account. If you need to have it printed for pick up or mailed, please contact the church office. If you have any questions or need any information, please don't hesitate to call Tommye Owen at 843-766-8311, ext. 105 or finance@wpccharleston.org. For online givers, please make sure to update your "giving fund" to 2026 pledge starting in January.

THIS WEEK AT WESTMINSTER

Sunday, December 21

9:00 am	Worship Service
10:00 am	Sunday School
11:00 am	Worship Service
4:00 pm	Book Group, Pastor Daniel's Office
6:00 pm	Stated Session Meeting, Classroom 4, Covenant Hall
7:00 pm	AA Meeting, Covenant Hall

Monday, December 22

Tuesday, December 23

Wednesday, December 24

	Church Office Closed
3:00 pm	Christmas Eve Worship, Families and Young Children
5:00 pm	Christmas Eve Worship, Families and Young Children
7:00 pm	Christmas Eve Worship, Carols and Candlelight
7:30 pm	AA Meeting, Covenant Hall

Thursday, December 25

Church Office Closed

Friday, December 26

Church Office Closed

Saturday, December 27

Sunday, December 28

10:00 am	Worship Service
	No Sunday School
7:00 pm	AA Meeting, Covenant Hall

COMMUNITY SUPPORT NUMBERS

Al-Anon (843) 762-6999

Community Resource and Support Hotline 211

Neighbors Together (843) 747-1788

Narcotics Anonymous (843) 852-3001

Mental Health Crisis Hotline 988

PostPartumsupportchas.org

WESTMINSTER PRAYS

Cary Alexandre (WPC)	Margaret Ellen Hamman (Suzanne Fox)	Julie Pell (Sandy & Debbie Pell)
Daryn Baker (Jane Acker)	Janie Hammersmith (WPC)	Crystal Pluck (Jennifer Binnicker)
Mary Ashley Barbot (Lisa Couch)	Megan Hatfield (Debbie McQueeney)	Pratt Family (WPC Preschool)
Ron Booth (WPC)	Betsy Henson (Ashley Snider)	Donna Purcell (WPC)
Sissie Brigman (WPC)	Anna Hewitt (Dee Bee Wright)	Stan Rich (Suzanne & Tim Fox)
Allyn Bruce (WPC)	Charlie Howell (Debbie Baskin)	Nita Rodemann (WPC)
Diane Byers (Deb Frasier)	Chris Huff (Gloria Purcell)	Cliff & Liz Shelor (WPC)
Susie Cashion (WPC)	Janssen Family (WPC)	Tradd Shepard (WPC)
Lauren Choate (Sara Dwyer)	Emerson Jones (Molly Griggs)	Rachel Singletary (Sara Bobo)
Pat Coggins (WPC)	Lynn Koger (WPC)	The Jerry Smoak Family (WPC)
Cherie Couche (Dana Tumbleston)	Mary Laird (Ashley Snider)	Ray Thomas (Sara Dwyer)
Allen Croft (Gwen Croft)	Fran Ligon (WPC)	Towne Family (WPC)
Lydia Crosby (WPC)	Jane Livingston (Tom Livingston)	Gloria Underhill (Laura Nunn)
Martin Davis (Kevin Mikles)	Ray Long (Ellen Bollinger)	Kathy Unger (Keith Gordon)
Rose Derrick (Brenda Clarey)	John Martschink (WPC)	Jacqueline Vance (Sara Dwyer)
Hosanna Eadie (Katie Baturin)	Mary Martschink (WPC)	Mark Warner (Kendall Ramsay)
Roxanne Eadie (Katie Baturin)	Jay Massalon (Dana Tumbleston)	Tom Whetstone (WPC)
Ann & Ellen Farrar (Beth Georgen)	David McEachern (Debra Luhn)	Aileen Wiese (WPC)
Edward Fitzgibbon (Joan Frye)	Gavin McLeod (Dana Tumbleston)	Janet Wilson (Gloria Purcell)
Randleson Floyd/Daniels (Gloria Purcell)	Marley Miller (Dee Bee Wright)	Betty Winter (Dee Bee Wright)
Harold Fountain (Henry Shepard)	Abbie Mobley (WPC)	Robbie Yarnall (WPC)
Joan Frye (WPC)	Moody Family (WPC)	
Keith Gordon (WPC)	Jennifer Morgan (Susie Cashion)	
	Joe Nuchols (Debbie McQueeney)	

PRAYER LIST UPDATED NOVEMBER 2025

If you need to add or remove someone from the prayer list, please email office@wpccharleston.org

Friend of the Week	Mission of the Week	Student of the Week	Church Family
Carolyn Drose	Thornwell Home for	Molly Nida	Daniel Smith & Kelly
201 W. 9 th North Street	Children	2463 Flamingo Drive	Massagee
Summerville, SC 29483	302 S. Broad Street	Charleston, SC 29414	Keelen & Lieren
	Clinton, SC 29325		

ELDERS AND SESSION COMMITTEES

Administration: Michael Patrick and Paul Patrick; **Buildings and Grounds:** Randy Davis and Tim Fox; **Christian Education:** Cathy Grills and Kevin Mikles; **Fellowship:** Jon Bazzle, Janie Bruce and Michael Scruggs; **Finance:** Sarah Schumann and Joshua Robinson; **Membership:** John Dounian and Cameron Baker; **Missions:** Mary McAbee and Natasha Akery; **Preschool:** Ashley Snider; **Worship:** Allyn Bruce and Deborah-Anne Ferguson; **Clerk:** Carole Russell; **Assistant Clerk:** Cathy Grills
Treasurer: Tim Fox

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1157 Sam Rittenberg Boulevard
Charleston, SC 29407
www.wpccharleston.org (843) 766-8311

Rev. Dr. Daniel L. Smoak, Pastor, dsmoak@wpccharleston.org
Priscilla Holtzclaw, Parish Associate, pwholtz@gmail.com
Claire Winkles, Director of Youth & Children's Ministries, cwinkles@wpccharleston.org
Sarah Shayban, Director of Music, sshayban@wpccharleston.org
Kate Cowart, Office Administrator, office@wpccharleston.org
Tommye Owen, Financial Administrator finance@wpccharleston.org
Alicia Crosby, Preschool Director, preschool@wpccharleston.org
Meg Dorsel, Communications Coordinator, mdorsel@wpccharleston.org