



First Sunday of Advent    December 3, 2023

A Service of the Word

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WE GATHER AT GOD'S INVITATION

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\*Worshippers are invited to stand in body or spirit. **Bold text indicates unison readings.**

WELCOME AND INVITATIONS TO DISCIPLESHIP

The Rev. Dr. Robert Wm Lowry, Pastor

PRELUDE

David Austin, Director of Music

†LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Cindy Hamilton & Sheila Mylar

In this season of waiting, of longing, of looking for you to come into our world, we are seeking light.

*The first candle is lit.*

In our own lives, **We are seeking light.**

In our neighborhoods, **We are seeking light.**

In our families, **We are seeking light.**

In our work, **We are seeking light.**

In Grace, **We are seeking light.**

In our nation, **We are seeking light.**

In our world, **We are seeking light.**

Seek and you shall find

Knock and the door will be opened

Ask and it will be given to you

**Jesus Christ, you are the light of the world**

**May we have eyes to see you**

**And ears to hear you**

**Come into our world today. Amen.**



+SUNG ADORATION

“Sometimes a Light Surprises (Modern)”

AURELIA

Text by Sally Browder

Some-times a Light sur- pri- ses in days of dim des- pair; Some glimpse of dawn a-  
ri- ses some ligh- ten- ing of care. From gloom that would dis- pir- it, this  
ho- ly light would lead; And whis- per where we hear it for joy to in- ter- cede.

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It consists of three systems of music. Each system has a vocal line on a treble clef staff and a piano accompaniment on a bass clef staff. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

+ORATION PRAYER

Let us pray:

Holy God of Hope, give us ears to hear and hearts to trust the promises you offer to us in this season of Advent. As we worship together, we offer ourselves to you and we open ourselves to your abundant grace. Amen.

+HYMN OF PRAISE #9

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

VENI EMMANUEL

CALL TO CONFESSION

Brothers and sisters, we are complicated creatures. We have the capacity to love and to disdain, a propensity to cherish and ignore, a willingness to see what we want and be blind to what we do not.

We are at times sinners and saints, heroes, heroines, and heretics.

But at all times, in every moment of every day of creation, we are children of God. And as children of God, we are children of God’s compassion. Together, with confidence that God’s word of mercy is true, let us acknowledge where we fall short of the glory of God and recall where the mercy of God touches our lives.

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

The voice of one comes  
crying out in the wilderness  
**... prepare the way of the Lord.**

A messenger prepares the way,  
transforming us like the refiner's fire  
**... calling us to account.**

For the prophets of old have spoken,  
announcing the breaking open of the dawn  
**... guiding our feet in the way of peace.**

**Merciful God...**  
**forgive us, heal us,**  
**encourage us and speak through us,**  
**that we may be transformed through the refiner's fire,**  
**and that the offerings of our hands and our hearts**  
**may prepare the way for the Christ child**  
**to be welcomed among us in peace.**

*Silence is kept.*

## ASSURANCE OF PARDON

...in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. **Thanks be to God!**

## †THE PEACE OF CHRIST

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ which passes all understanding be with you all.  
**And also with you.**

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## WE PROCLAIM GOD'S WORD

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## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

## OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Jeremiah 33:14-18

*The time is coming, declares the LORD, when I will fulfill my gracious promise with the people of Israel and Judah. In those days and at that time, I will raise up a righteous branch from David's line, who will do what is just and right in the land. In those days, Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety.*

*And this is what he will be called: The LORD Is Our Righteousness. The LORD proclaims: David will always have one of his descendants sit on the throne of the house of Israel. And the levitical priests will always have someone in my presence to make entirely burned offerings and grain offerings, and to present sacrifices.*

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 WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD
 

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 †HYMN OF RESPONSE #13  
 HERRAN

*“Prepare the Way, O Zion”*

BEREDEN VÄG FÖR

†AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Advent Credo

Daniel Berrigan, S.J.

It is not true that creation and the human family are doomed to destruction and loss—

**This is true:**

**For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son,  
that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life;**

It is not true that we must accept inhumanity and discrimination,  
hunger and poverty, death and destruction—

**This is true:**

**I have come that they may have life, and that abundantly.**

It is not true that violence and hatred should have the last word,  
and that war and destruction rule forever—

**This is true:**

**Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given,  
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,  
his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.**

OFFERING

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 WE GATHER AT GOD’S TABLE
 

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INVITATION TO THE TABLE

THE SURSUM CORDA

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

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.**

THE GREAT 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 BREAKING OF THE BREAD

THE COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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WE DEPART IN GOD'S NAME

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†PARTING HYMN #409      *“Wild and Lone the Prophet’s Voice”*      ABERYSTWYTH

†CHARGE & BENEDICTION

†POSTLUDE

## Welcome

We are so glad to be worshipping with you today.

If this is your first visit, welcome! If you have been with us before, welcome back! Whether you are a life-long Presbyterian, a brand-new Christian, or someone who is just trying to make sense of this world we share, we hope you will feel at home at Westover Hills Presbyterian.

## Let us know you are worshipping with us!

In the pew you will find an information card. Please leave us information on how we might be in touch with you to share more about life at Westover Hills. We would love to share a little about our story and hear more about yours. If you do not see a card in the pew near you, please ask one of the ushers you saw when you came in and we will be sure to get one for you.

## Muses Project Christmas Concert

The Muses Project from Hot Springs will present their holiday performance at Westover Hills this afternoon at 4pm. Take a break from the busyness of the season to experience shared peace and wonder and hear the Angel voices welcome Emmanuel through song, word, music, and dance.

## Midweek Manna

Midweek Manna has resumed on Wednesdays at noon in the New Chapel downstairs and via Zoom. We are reflecting each week on the previous Sunday's lectionary text. This week our focus will be on Jeremiah 33. Zoom information is available in the CareLine.

## Yoga

Yoga is for everyone! Our yoga group meets at 10am on Thursday in the New Chapel (downstairs). This class is for beginners and experienced alike. All you need is a yoga mat and an open mind.

## Online Giving

You can now make donations online! By donating you can choose to give to Westover Hills and/or our nested New Worshiping communities, The Table and The Queer Collective. You may find the link in the CareLine, and simply click the "funds" tab to pick which you'd like to give to. You can make a one-time donation or schedule a recurring gift. Also, by setting up an account, you can keep up with your digital records online. Our communities are so grateful for your generosity and hope this platform is helpful for you.





# 56TH COTHAM LECTURES

Westover Hills Presbyterian Church

“Faith and  
Community: How  
Engagement Helps  
Everyone”

Saturday December 9  
7pm

“Why and How  
Religion Can  
Lead on Race”

Sunday  
December 10  
7pm



FEATURING  
Dr. Rebecca Glazier  
UALR

Lectures are free and open to the  
public.

Westover Hills is a congregation of  
the Presbyterian Church (USA)

6400 Richard B. Hardie Drive  
At the roundabout with McKinley and Pine Valley

# CHRISTMAS AT WESTOVER HILLS

ADVENT WORSHIP  
SERVICES 10:30AM  
DECEMBER 3, 10, 17, 24

THE MUSES PROJECT  
HOLIDAY CONCERT  
4PM DECEMBER 3

BLUE CHRISTMAS/  
LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE  
7PM DECEMBER 21

CHRISTMAS EVE  
CANDLELIGHT SERVICE  
5:30PM DECEMBER 24





### **Reverse Advent Calendars**

This year for the season of Advent we have adopted a “reverse Advent calendar” program to benefit our mission partners. While a traditional Advent calendar has a little treat hidden for each day of the season, the reverse Advent calendar is an invitation to *add* a little treat for one of our neighbors in need. There will also be weekly reflections, a suggested way to offer a gesture of love and goodwill each Saturday, and a special prayer request for each Sunday of Advent.

Each weekday you are invited to add to your reverse Advent calendar bag an item that is needed by one of our partners. This may be a bag of dry beans for El Zócalo or a pair of mittens for the Mitten Tree. Each item on the list has been identified by our partners as a particular need for either the season or on an ongoing basis. We will collect the bags on Christmas Eve at our candlelight service and offer a blessing over them. If you are unable to attend or will be travelling, you may bring your filled bags by the church before Christmas Eve or after January 1.

The mission partners benefitting from the reverse Advent calendars are:

- El Zócalo food pantry
- Ferncliff (international summer staff)
- WHPC Mitten Tree
- The Jail Ministry
- Vera Lloyd Presbyterian Family Services (specifically the boys’ houses)

### **Tornado Recovery Long-term Relief**

Volunteers, under the auspices of the Pulaski County Long Term Recovery Committee, are needed to do door-to-door assessment of emotional and spiritual health of people impacted by the March 31, 2023 tornado in Pulaski County. The date will be Saturday, December 9, 2023. Compassion and active listening skills are required; professional training and/or disaster response experience are extremely helpful.

Schedule for the day: training in the Hardie Chapel at Westover Hills on Saturday, December 9, from 10am-12noon, enjoy pizza lunch at noon and go to assigned neighborhoods from 12:30–3pm.

For information, contact Liz Branch at [erbranch@comcast.net](mailto:erbranch@comcast.net).

### **Stewpot**

The Stewpot needs clothes and personal items to replenish the shelves due to a sharp increase in need. The following items are particularly in demand:

- Ball caps
- Men’s athletic shoes
- Men’s jeans and Docker’s (khaki-type) pants size 30-36
- Travel size toothpaste, shampoo, lotion, and soap

- Daypack/bookbag style backpacks

Donations may be left in the Narthex on Sundays or in the donation bin in the church office.

Stewpot is also in need of volunteers for the clothes closet.

Volunteers are needed Tuesdays 9:00-11:00 and Thursdays from 9:00-1:00. Please contact Nancy Sherman Carter if you can help; her email is nesherman57@yahoo.com

## *CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER*

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### **Prayer and Meditation**

There are two important traditions at Westover Hills that join our voices in prayer every week. The first is *Prayer on the 9's*. Every day you are able, join us in taking a minute to pause at 9am and 9pm to offer a short prayer for the church, the world, or someone you know who needs comfort.

We also share every Sunday in the bulletin and every Wednesday in the Careline e-newsletter the list of pastoral care concerns known to the church. Members and friends are invited to pray for those people and world issues named on the list. Prayers of comfort, for healing, and for peace are always appropriate ways to remember our friends and neighbors. This week we remember:

Shayne Smith (friend of Pastor Robert and Brian) following a double lung transplant in Dallas; Family of Max Ostner (Pastor Robert's cousin, died early Wednesday morning); Family of Judy Lowry (mother-in-law of Rev. Brian Brock at Central-Russellville and cousin of Pastor Robert, died Thanksgiving morning); Catherine Lowry (Pastor Robert's mother, at home recovering from a stroke); Pete Welch (friend of Ann Patterson, undergoing triple bypass surgery); Doyle Hughes (at St. Vincent); Kristi Craddock (Cindy Hamilton's cousin who is out of the ICU but still in the hospital); Aaron and Paige Hall (friends of Robert and Brian) on the death of Paige's father; Judy Lyle; Courtenay Jackson; Debbie Waltermire (friend of Betty Deere; diagnosed with breast cancer); family of Barbara Polite (manager of Clothes Closet; who died recently); Jason Chrisman (son of Mary Chrisman); Duke Monroe and family (death on October 29th of Duke's wife, Barbara); Douglas Ponce (director of El Zócalo; his mother is hospitalized in El Salvador); The Garcia family (friends of Sydney, recent passing of daughter/sister and the father is recovering in the hospital from two strokes); Christiana Esem-Kuwong; Mary Ellen Holder; Anna Grace Clark (brain cancer); Reverend Doug Kanney (heart issues); family of Vivianna McAtee, who died on October 6; Jim Miller (broken ankle, at home); Lila Quinn; Deran Abernathy (son-in-law of former member Judy Huffman; stage 4 lung cancer); Rev. Carol-Ann Blow (health issues); Johnny Rhodes; the people of Maui, who are recovering from a wildfire; the people impacted by wildfires in the Presbytery of South Louisiana; FPC DeRidder, LA, and the Korean New Worshipping Community of DeRidder (providing shelter and support for evacuees); the WHPC Staff: Robert, Tammy, David, Ulysses, Shawn, and Sydney; WHPC Preschool, children, and families. If you or a loved one would like to be added to the prayer list, please contact the church office at

[office.westoverhills@gmail.com](mailto:office.westoverhills@gmail.com) Names remain on the prayer list until we are notified to remove them or until the end of the quarter.

### **Home Communion**

Pastor Robert and the Deacons are working to offer a more regular schedule for communion for our TLC members who cannot attend church. If you know of someone who may like to be on our home communion schedule, please let Robert or Shirley Garlington know.

Recently Robert and Nancy Blackstone visited Jane Tiner with communion prior to Jane's upcoming move to Kansas City.

### **Deacon's Ministry**

The Deacons for November are John Mac Leod, Ann Bell, and Marcey Berry. Please contact them with any pastoral care needs or updates. You may also contact Pastor Robert with any updates.



## *STAY CONNECTED*

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### **CareLine**

Stay up to date with news and pastoral care updates with the CareLine. If you do not already receive this now once-weekly email newsletter, please contact the church office to add your name to the distribution.

If you have information to be included in the CareLine, please contact the office. The deadline for the Careline is 5pm Tuesday.

### **Calendar Updates and Session Reports**

All updates to the church calendar and any information for the church session should be sent to the office.

## *STAFF AND MINISTRY LEADERSHIP*

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**Dr. Robert Wm Lowry** Pastor/Head of Staff

**David Austin** Director of Music

**Shawn Mittedorf** Preschool Director

**Tammy Pflug** Treasurer

**Sydney McEwen** Administrative Assistant

**Ulysses Neyland** Sexton

**Elder Liz Branch** Recording Clerk & Christian Education Ministry

**Elder Candice Misenheimer** Corresponding Clerk & Matthew 25 (Yard Sign Ministry)

**Elder Ray Stephens** Worship and Arts

**Elder Bob Quinn** Building and Grounds

**Elder Ann Patterson** Stewardship and Finance

**Sally Browder** Matthew 25 (Church Vitality)

**Donna Callaway** Presbyterian Women

**Elder Bill Smith** Personnel

**Alice Ahart** Kitchen

**Deacons Rosemary McGinnis and Laura Whitmore** Board of Deacons

## AFFILIATED MINISTRIES

**Rev. Michael Gallup** The Table

**Rev. Marie Mainard O'Connell** The Central Arkansas Queer Collective

**Rev. Deacon Carol-Ann Blow** Sister Thea Bowman Ecumenical Catholic Church

## **Westover Hills Presbyterian Church**

6400 Richard B. Hardie Drive

Little Rock, AR 72207



Church Calendar and Website