

HOTLINE

WE ARE ONE IN THE SPIRIT

WE ARE ONE IN THE LORD

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1684 IOWA ST. | DUBUQUE, IA | firstpresdbq.org

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

2155 UNIVERSITY AVE | DUBUQUE, IA | wpcdbq.org

Volume 26, No. 2 | MARCH 2025

PARTNERSHIP TASK FORCE UPDATE

Worship Experience Blends Traditions

As we continue our journey toward unification, our worship experience remains at the heart of our shared faith. The Partnership Task Force's Worship working group, headed by Roger Ebertz (FPC) and Susan Taylor (WPC) and collaborating closely with Pastor Stephanie and key committees, is dedicated to blending traditions from both congregations, ensuring a meaningful and inclusive space for all. Through collaboration and thoughtful planning, we are making strides in strengthening our worship services, fostering community, and deepening our spiritual connection all while reflecting our shared Presbyterian faith and values.

Recent Accomplishments

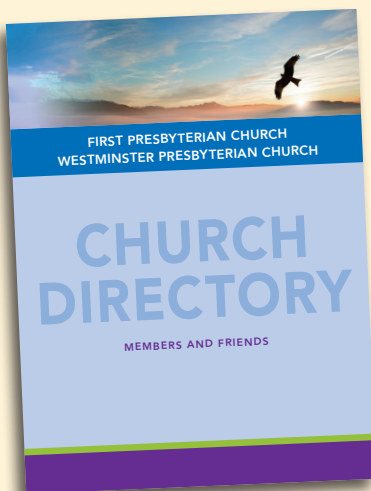
- Began to coordinate the recruitment and equipping of volunteers to assist with communion, offering, church setup, and hospitality responsibilities in conjunction with worship services.
- Revitalized the church Worship Team and held a productive meeting with eight participants to balance various worship needs.
- Ordered additional *Glory to God* hymnals and received pew Bible samples, ensuring consistency in worship materials.
- Established an Usher and Greeter rotation to create a welcoming atmosphere for all attendees.
- Organized a structured process for worship leadership through April, including liturgists and role descriptions.

Next Steps for Unification

- Address worship space design for optimal inclusive and vital worship experience
- Continue mixing worship leadership between both congregations to foster our sense of unity
- Compile a list of ordained Deacons and Elders available to serve communion.

We are excited about these developments and grateful for everyone's dedication to fostering a united and spiritually vibrant worship experience. Stay tuned for further updates as we continue this journey together!

Wanted: Your Smiling Face In Our Church Directory!



We're on a mission to grow our church family connections – and that starts with putting names to faces! Right now, we have photos for about half of our 230 households, but our goal is to reach 90% by Easter!

How can you help? Simple! Get your picture in the directory in one of these three ways:

- **Snap a Quick Photo at Church** – Doug Cheever is available before and after worship (sign up at the Information Desk). He can take about 10 photos per Sunday, so don't wait!
- **Email Your Picture** – Send a jpeg file to Mary Kay, and she'll handle the rest.
- **Hand in a Printed Photo** – Give Mary Kay a hard copy, and she'll scan and return it.

Let's make it easier for all of us to connect with one another. Help us reach our goal and submit your photo soon!

Mary Kay Retires; New Administrator Named



We offer our sincerest thanks and deepest gratitude to **MaryKay Pancratz** for her 13 years of service as the Church Administrator at Westminster Presbyterian Church. She has been a rock of care and knowledge, and will be greatly missed as she heads into retirement mid-April. MaryKay looks forward to spending quality time with

her grandchildren and traveling with her husband, Tim. **A retirement reception for MaryKay will be held following worship on Sunday, April 6, 2025.** We hope you will join us in showing her our love and appreciation!



Jeff Gladwin has been hired as the new Church Administrator and will start March 3, 2025. MaryKay will be present for his initial onboarding. We anticipate Jeff being a fabulous addition to the staff. Jeff brings with him over 25 years of management experience, and a passion for learning, growing, and being kind and generous. Jeff will graduate in August from the University of

Dubuque with a BA in Human Resource Management and is already taking classes toward his MBA.

Jeff was born and raised in Dubuque. At the age of 14, his mother remarried, and they moved to Garnavillo, IA, where he graduated from high school. Jeff lived in Guttenberg, Iowa for around 25 years and has 3 grown children, along with 7 grandchildren. He got divorced in 2020. Jeff and his partner, Dan, moved to Dubuque last August. The pair began attending our church in late October, and Jeff hopes to serve the congregation by utilizing his various skill sets to assist the pastor and various committees with future endeavors.

Jeff welcomes you to stop by the church office and say "Hi!"



Ed Blinks (WPC Member) was recently awarded a Lifetime Membership in the Kiwanis Club of Dubuque. Rev. Paul Uzel (right), President of the Kiwanis Club presented the award. Ed has been a Kiwanis Club member for 53 years. Congratulations, Ed!

Recent Attendance Report

DATE	IN PERSON	TOTAL (Includes Livestream)
Jan. 5th	117	266
Jan. 12th	95	184
Jan. 19th	127	(No Livestream)
Jan. 26th	109	261
Feb. 2nd	126	219
Feb. 9th	118	190
Feb. 16th	116	191

Westminster Financial Report

As of January 31, 2025

Income.....	\$39,695.24
Expenses	\$41,672.07
Income over Expenses (loss)	(\$1,976.83)

WORSHIP LOCATION: We will continue to worship at WPC every week through the end of March. The Sessions of both congregations have approved this to provide for optimal safety and ease during our coldest weather. We will continue to distribute the offering to FPC on the 2nd & 4th Sundays, and to WPC on the 1st, 3rd, & 5th Sundays and will have reminders in the bulletin each week for your convenience.

WEATHER BAD? IS CHURCH CANCELED? If inclement weather exists, Sunday morning worship may be canceled. This decision will be made no later than 7:00 am Sunday morning and will be posted on the WPC and FPC websites and emailed to both congregations. If Sunday morning worship is canceled, there will be no Sunday evening activities. During the week, we will follow the Dubuque Community Schools closings and/or delays. Please be diligent in planning for winter weather circumstances.

FAITH EXPLORATION

FOOD • FAITH • FELLOWSHIP

Sunday Evenings
5:30pm – Meal provided
6–7:00pm – Classes for All
Moms on Fire!
Childcare Provided

New Sunday Night Schedule for Lent

During lent the **Adult class** will watch Season 3 of *The Chosen* with discussion following each episode. *The Chosen* is a Christian TV series that tells the story of Jesus Christ's life and ministry. It is based on the Gospels of the Bible. Primarily set in Judea and Galilee in the first century, the series centers on people who met and followed him.

Moms on Fire will be doing a Lenten devotional along with their usual discussions on "mom" challenges.

Elementary and youth will continue with Feasting on the Word curriculum and game time.

BIBLE STUDY TOPICS

MARCH – *The Chosen* – Season 3

Mar. 2	Episode 1	Matthew 5
Mar. 9	Episode 2	Matt 10:1-15; Mark 6:7-13; Luke 9:1-6
Mar. 16	Episode 6	Matt 10:34-36; John 12:22-26; Luke 7:18-33
Mar. 23	Episode 7	Matt 22:1-14; Luke 14:15-24
Mar. 30	To Be Announced	

APRIL – *The Chosen* – Season 3

Apr. 6	Episode 8 Pt. 1	Psalm 77; Matt 13
Apr. 13	Episode 8 Pt. 2	Matt 14:13-33
Apr. 20	Easter – No Evening Fellowship	



Genesis Bible Study Continues

Marsha Wilfong will continue the Thursday morning Bible study on the book of *Genesis*.

This Spring we will explore the second part of *Genesis*, chapters 12-50: God's call/relationship with a special people through Abraham. Three generations of family sagas are told in the remainder of the book: Abraham & Sarah, Jacob & Esau, and Joseph & his brothers. To some degree, these new stories parallel the "family" stories told in Gen. 1-11 (Adam & Eve, Cain & Abel, and Noah & his sons).

The question remains: Which will succeed – God's plan or human plans?

All are invited to join us on Thursday mornings, March 6 – May 1, 11:00 am in the Board Room.



Let's Fill the Care Cart!

Each month, First and Westminster join together to help those in need in our community. Look for the **Care Cart** located in the back of the sanctuary at Westminster. We'll rotate recipients as follows:

March 2nd – Dubuque Food Pantry (Helping those in our community with food) Any type of non-perishable food is a huge help.

March 9th – Opening Doors (Helping women and children who have been abused and experiencing homelessness.) Cleaning supplies, Tide Pods, garbage bags, items that women may need such as toothbrushes, tooth paste, shampoo and etc.

If you have questions contact Linda Stovall, Mission Chair at linstov@aol.com.

March 16th – Dubuque Food Pantry

March 23rd – Dubuque Rescue Mission (Helping men who are homeless and the community that they feed daily. They feed between 150-200 people a day.)

- Ground beef (deliver directly to Rescue Mission)
- Peanut butter/Jelly
- Ground coffee
- Fresh produce
- Bread
- Cereal
- Eggs
- Milk
- Liquid body wash/shampoo (NO bars of soap)
- Razors/shaving cream
- Deodorant
- Toothbrushes/toothpastes
- Granola bars
- Fruit snacks
- Beef jerky
- Hot chocolate
- Towels/washcloths
- Twin size bed sets
- Blankets
- Pillows/pillowcases
- Underwear
- Gift cards to Theisen's for work shoes
- Chapstick
- Hand warmers
- First aid supplies
- High efficiency laundry detergent (preferably pods)
- Kleenex tissues
- Toilet paper
- Cleaning wipes/cleaning spray (Clorox bathroom spray)
- Dish soap
- Bleach

Mission Team Update Highlights Café Justo Coffee

COFFEE AND COMPASSION

The Mission Team will have a table setup in the Narthex after worship on March 9 and 16 to help members learn how to order the **Café Justo Coffee** that is now being served at church. Café Justo is a cooperative of Mexican coffee growers formed by Frontera de Cristo in 2022. The coffee is not only delicious, but also provides migrant shelters in Agua Prieta, Nogales, Sasabe, Tamaulipas, Durango, and Tapachuls through our Love Mercy, Do Justice Ministry. **For more information go to fronteradecristo.org/cafe-justo**



Packages of coffee can be delivered to your home, and there will be forms available. There are 3 types of coffee available (regular, dark, and decaf) in whole bean or ground for \$12 for a 1-lb bag, which includes shipping. The minimum order is 2 pounds. You will have the opportunity to add a donation when ordering the coffee. Please consider helping!

MISSION GRANTS

The Mission Team has Mission Grants available for our Presbyterians churches. If you have a great idea that you would like to apply for, please contact Linda Stovall at LinStov@aol.com. We have approved several grants already, including the Mission Garden, Seminary Tables and the Knitting/Crochet project.

Help needed for U/D Seminary Table

We need your help on the following dates:

March 10th, March 24th, April 7th, and August 7th.

The time for helping runs from 9 am to 1 pm. You do not have to be there the whole time, but it does help if you do. We also need treats dropped off for each table.

Please contact **Rich Henderson** at 563-580-6289 or email hs3eagles@gmail.com if you can help on a certain day and if you would like to bring treats (this is important as we do not want to get a lot of treats for just one day and it helps to know if we are short helpers or treats).



GIVE UP PLASTIC FOR LENT

March 5 to April 13

Take your reusable bags with you to shop. If you need a new bag, take one of our soon-to-be collector's items from the info. desk. Pick up a contest form from the desk also. The person who uses their reusable bags most often will receive a prize.

Why Not Use Plastic Bags?

- **Plastic is a petroleum product, a non-renewable fossil fuel.** Production of bags is energy intensive, uses 9 % of our current oil supply, and contributes to greenhouse gases.
- **Plastic from bags contaminates our food.** Plastic bags are composed of synthetic polymers that break into microscopic pieces that enter the soil, water, food and our bodies.
- **Plastic bags are expensive.** A bag costs retailers 3 to 5 cents each, costs an average of 17 cents per bag to clean up and clogs landfills.

Be a good steward of God's creation – give up plastic bags for Lent! – The Green Team



Stewardship is a very important part of our church. It's where we pledge funds to allow our church to function. Some of those funds go to the Care Team.

I got a first hand view of the Care Team when I unexpectedly was in the hospital. The next morning Sam Wu showed up to talk to me and give me words of encouragement. Not only did Sam show up Monday, but he also came Tuesday & Wednesday. I was also on the prayer list and received cards and food later after getting out of the hospital. In addition, a number of church members came to visit me in the hospital. The funds we pledge do make a difference! I can not say enough about those that visited, sent cards, and prayed.

Thanks,
Rich Henderson



Summer Fun for All Ages

Bear Creek Camp has something for everyone. Search through their programs and find the right one for you. Program eligibility is based on what grade you will be entering in the fall of 2025.

Registration has already started for Summer Youth Camp. Please go to their website to sign up.

<https://bearcreek.camp/programs>

SAVE THE DATE
Synod School July 20 - 25, 2025
 Buena Vista University Storm Lake, Iowa
 Fun and inspiration for the entire family
Watch for more details soon!

BUY SCRIP GIFT CARDS

Give More Without Spending More

The concept is simple: Our church purchases Scrip gift cards from popular retailers at a discount. Members and friends then buy the gift cards from the church at face value.

Stop by the SCRIP desk on Sunday mornings or in the church office Monday through Thursday and pick up a list of available local retailers and restaurants. You can purchase the cards using check, cash, or online at www.raiseright.com.

Last year \$10,000 (\$1,620 from 2024) was transferred from SCRIP to the operating budget. The more members who participate the more we can all support our church.

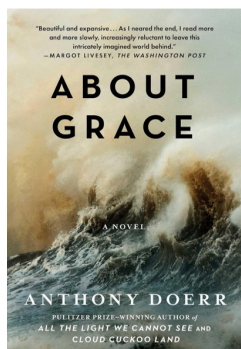
Another benefit is the amount each individual earned from Scrip is on church year end statement. You do have to add it the total giving to get the tax credit.

Scan the QR Code,
 or go to
www.raiseright.com
 and use this code
 to sign up:
 858E578L1LL3



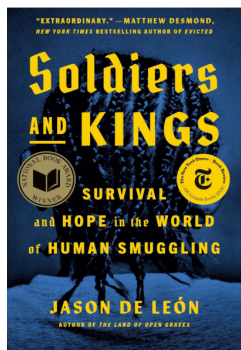
Like to Read? Join Our Book Group

Join us in lively discussions on a different book each **third Wednesday of the month at 3:30 pm**. In February, Arlys Williams will host our group at Mt. Carmel Bluffs. See our list of reads by month:



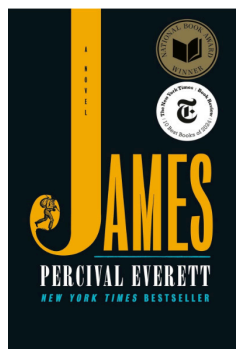
March – *About Grace* by Anthony Doerr. David Winkler begins life in Anchorage, Alaska, a quiet boy drawn to the volatility of weather and obsessed with snow. Sometimes he sees things before they happen—When David dreams that his infant daughter will drown in a flood as he tries to save her, he comes undone. He travels thousands of miles, fleeing

family, home, and the future itself, to deny the dream. Doerr's characters are full of grief and longing, but also replete with grace. His compassion for human frailty is extraordinarily moving. *About Grace* is heartbreaking, radiant, and astonishingly accomplished.



April – *Soldiers and Kings: Survival and Hope in the World of Human Smuggling* by Jason De León. Winner of the National Book Award for nonfiction plus many best book of 2024 awards. In an effort to better understand this essential yet extralegal billion dollar global industry of human smuggling, internationally

recognized anthropologist and expert Jason De León embedded with a group of smugglers moving migrants across Mexico over the course of seven years. The result is: the first ever in-depth, character-driven look at human smuggling. It is a heart-wrenching and intimate narrative that revolves around the life and death of one coyote who falls in love and tries to leave smuggling behind.



May – *James* by Percival Everett – National Book Award winner, Shortlisted for the Booker Prize, Kirkus Prize plus many best book of the year awards. A brilliant, action-packed reimagining of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, both harrowing and darkly humorous, told from the enslaved Jim's point of view.

For questions or more information, please contact Deb Sieffert – debseiffert@gmail.com.



Thank you to all who donated to the Souper Bowl of Caring! Our churches were able to raise \$506 and donate 282 food items. What an amazing gift to benefit the Dubuque Food Pantry!

Wheelchairs, walker available

Thanks to Paula McNally who donated her late husband Dave's wheel chair to the church. Our church has two wheelchairs and a walker to assist anyone who needs help.

Just ask a greeter or usher if you have mobility issues and need to use one of these during worship or any event in the church building.



WITH DEEPEST *Sympathy*

Our entire congregation extends sincere sympathy to the family and friends of church member

Marlene Kaiser
who recently passed.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. – Matthew 5:4



Join us for
Lighting the Lantern
Saturday
March 15, 2025
5:30 PM, Program 6:45 PM
Hotel Julien Ballroom
Tickets \$90 each
Sponsorships: \$500 to \$5,000

Featuring Guest Speaker
Alex Baum
Director of Advocacy,
Data and Learning
Community Foundation of
Greater Dubuque

To register, scan the QR code,
or visit thelanterncenter.org.





THE LANTERN CENTER
900 Jackson Street, Suite LL5-1
Dubuque, IA 52001
563.557.7134 thelanterncenter.org



'Lighting The Lantern' Benefits Immigrants/Refugees

The Presentation Lantern Center's annual "Lighting the Lantern" event is happening on Saturday, March 15 at the Hotel Julien ballroom. Experience the work of a nonprofit that has served over 85 countries over the past 23 years.

"Lighting the Lantern" is an annual fundraiser supporting the Center's free language program for multilingual students, citizenship test preparation and advocacy for immigrants and refugees. Doors open at 5:30 PM, program begins at 6:45 PM. Tickets are \$90 and include two drink tickets and heavy hors d'oeuvres. Entertainment provided by Steve and Terry Slade, Terry Dillon and Masa Iwasaki.

"We are taking our annual event to the next level with an engaging program featuring emcee Heather Trees and a keynote from Alex Baum, Director of Advocacy, Data and Learning at the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque," said Ann Lorenz, community outreach director. She added, "The event also features an artistic display by local independent photographer Inti Ocón." Inti was born in Nicaragua and specializes in a wide variety of photography. Some of his work has been published by international agencies and newspapers including *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post* among others.

To register, and for more information or for tickets: Call 563-557-7134, visit thelanterncenter.org, or email ann@thelanterncenter.org.

Tri-State Area Programs for Women

All women of the church are cordially invited to the **John Knox Presbyterian Women Spring Gathering** on Saturday, May 3, 2025 at 9:30 a.m. Hosted by Portage Presbyterian Church PW, 120 W. Pleasant St., Portage, WI.

Program: Sleep in Heavenly Peace. The church is accessible and has an elevator. Lunch cost is \$8. RSVP by Wednesday, April 23 by calling or texting 563-419-7371 or email ripleyjb56@gmail.com. (Indicate if you have any dietary restrictions.) We look forward to seeing you!

Lenten Program for Women

Lectio Divina

"Divine Reading"


SPONSORED BY
Theresians of Dubuque

PRESENTED BY
Fr. Dave Schatz

Presentation Hall
St. Columbkille Catholic Church
1240 Rush Street
Lunch Provided

RSVP BY MARCH 15
563-513-8418 or
mmnauman@aol.com

Saturday, March 22, 2025
8:30AM-12:30PM



THANKS to the men's group for the delicious Valentine's Day brunch they served to the entire congregation on Feb. 9th.



Hunger Outreach at Westminster March 22nd

Hunger Outreach is a hands-on local mission project to help fight hunger and food insecurity in our community. It provides a means for us to put our faith in action and demonstrate God's love by caring for our neighbors and serving their basic needs. The March 22nd Hunger Outreach will be a joint effort of First Presbyterian Church, Westminster Presbyterian Church and the St. Stephen's Branch of River Bend Foodbank.

Families and individuals facing food insecurity are invited to come to our location and we will provide them with a supply of food free of charge. We hope to serve over 200 families and distribute over 15,000 lbs. of food.

8:00 AM – Volunteers arrive and receive instructions. Food truck arrives. Food is unloaded and organized. Traffic control and recipient registration begins.

9:00 AM – Food distribution begins. Recipients remain in vehicle while food is loaded in the trunk of their car. Walk-up participants will also be served. Distribution continues until food supplies are exhausted.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED – About 35+ volunteers will be needed from 8:00-11:00 a.m. We can provide everyone with a job that matches their comfort level. Sign up today on the sheet at the back of the sanctuary or contact Tom Stovall at 563-581-7220 or at tomstov@aol.com. Feel free to invite family, friends and neighbors to help.



Wise Transportation

Try to use your car less and reduce emissions into the air we breathe. When possible, use public transportation or carpooling. Even better yet, walk or bike for better health for you and the environment! When buying a new car do some research to find the most environmentally friendly one that will also save you money.