

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

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PARTNERSHIP TASK FORCE UPDATE

Church Forum Answers Your Questions

The Partnership Taskforce (PTF) thanks all of you who submitted questions for the Church Forum on Sunday, March 30th following worship. As we continue in the unification process, we will hold Church Forums on a quarterly basis for communication and input.

Here is what we discussed:

When will we have a new church name?

Over 140 different names were submitted during our congregational poll in February! Thank you for supplying the list of names – they are all amazing and it is obvious people gave a lot of thought to the submissions. The PTF has set a tentative date for unveiling of the name on Pentecost Sunday, June 8th – the Sunday we celebrate the original birth of the Christian Church – we will celebrate our “re-birth!”

Several people have asked how the decision will be made. That’s a great question! We want to get this right! The PTF has challenged itself to go beyond traditional thinking, and, in addition to those submitted, consider names that may bring an opportunity for new branding, broadening our demographic reach as well identifying a name that is ‘timeless.’ We had a great conversation about what names might resonate with young families, young professionals, and those that might be drawn to a name that identifies our values as a congregation.

Where are we going to worship?

Sunday morning worship will be held at the Westminster Presbyterian Church campus through the end of June, with the exception of Palm Sunday (April 13th) and Maundy Thursday (April 17) which will be held at the First Presbyterian Church campus downtown.

Between now and then, both Sessions are working together to make decisions beyond June. Due to increasing Sunday morning attendance, space in the Sanctuary has now also become a consideration. Our Sunday worship attendance is solidly between 100-140, and capacity seating at our FPC campus is 120.

What about the two buildings? Are we keeping them both?

Yes ... *for now*. Property is an organization’s most significant asset, and once it is sold, it is gone for

good! The Sessions, therefore, have determined being faithful stewards of the gifts God has given means that we embark on an intentional discernment process, rather than making any quick decisions we may regret later. Both the WPC and the FPC campus are ripe with possibilities for mission and community connections; and have deep historical significance in Dubuque.

We can afford the carrying costs of both properties for now, which is a privilege we do not take for granted. It is unlikely any significant change in property ownership or use will take place in 2025, and perhaps even 2026. Beyond that – we do not know, and cherish your prayers and participation in the process.

What is this “Good Futures Project” we keep hearing about?

This is the central tool we are using to discern possible uses of our properties that align with our mission. There is a Core Team (Kim David, Tom Stovall, Lindsey Ward, Rich Henderson, Rev. Ells, and Mark Ward) whom have been empowered by the Session to explore the question of how our congregation might leverage our property assets to put community mission at the forefront through social enterprises.

In the coming weeks, we will be inviting the congregation to participate in this journey. We need your input and engagement – so stay tuned for ways to get involved!

We are in a strong position, both in timing and influence, with a seat at the table in many community discussions focused on downtown development initiatives. We hope God will clearly reveal to us how we can effectively and missionally contribute to and grow alongside our city’s evolving landscape.

What about church growth?

We appreciated the questions about church growth and developing our wider community presence. One of the fruits we have already experienced from our partnership is a renewed sense of energy for the future. We will continue to seek answers to these questions as we gain our footing as a community.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Please make sure you mark your calendars for the following dates as the PTF will be hosting a three-week session to this end entitled: "Imaging Our Future Together." These sessions are designed to engage anyone who is interested in dreaming about how we can build the future of our new church! They will be held Sunday 4/27, 5/4, and 5/11 between 6-7 pm. A light supper will be served from 5:30-6pm. Childcare will be provided.

When will this unification be DONE!??

There are two main branches of the unification process – LEGAL (Sessions, money, property, tax purposes, state registration, etc) and FUNCTIONAL (how we do our work together – committees, worship, ministry, etc).

Functionally, we are essentially unified. All of our committees have begun meeting together for unified planning and ministry coordination; including our Deacon Board. Both Sessions are moderated by Rev. Ells, representatives from each Session attends the others meetings, and meeting minutes are shared in full transparency. The joint church staff meets weekly; and we share a Church Administrator and Financial Secretary. We have further exploration to do together, but significant progress has been made to the benefit of our new worshipping community! We are no longer functioning as "FPC" and "WPC," but a totally new combination of folks doing a new thing for Jesus in Dubuque.

Legally, we are on the way. This part is a bit more complex, as it includes working with a lawyer, the State of

Iowa, and the John Knox Presbytery. While functionally, we have already become a new worshipping community, and we will select a new name and continue to re-envision much of church life, legally, the process will entail amending one legal entity by renaming it, and then acquiring all of the assets of the other legal entity as a merger. It is riskier to establish a completely new corporate entity. One important thing is to ensure that both of the prior named corporations (FPC & WPC) are identified as successors, so that a history of corporate existence is established. All real assets will then be re-deeded into the new name.

A "plan of union" document is being drafted to outline each of the specific changes to take place. *Tentatively, our plan of union draft indicates a merger date of 12/31/25.* This is pending further legal advice and is not set in stone at this time.

How will church membership be handled?

Once the legal merger is complete, all members of WPC and FPC will need to transfer their membership; as neither FPC or WPC will exist at that point. Communications will be sent to all members of both congregations with clear membership options: affirm membership in the newly named worshipping community, request transfer elsewhere, or terminate membership. *A response from every recipient will be required* for an accurate record of individual membership decisions.

DREAMING FORWARD

IMAGINING OUR FUTURE TOGETHER

As we join together two congregations, we have the unique opportunity to imagine ways of becoming the church our community needs today. The leadership has been considering all the new possibilities ahead of us, and we need your input and participation!

Join the Partnership Taskforce for a series of Sunday night brainstorming sessions on **Sunday 4/27, 5/4, and 5/11 between 6-7pm in the Fellowship Hall.** A light supper will be served beforehand from 5:30-6pm. Childcare will be provided; older youth are encouraged to participate in our time together! Empowered by the Holy Spirit let's be ... courageous! Resilient! Imaginative!

FAITH EXPLORATION

FOOD • FAITH • FELLOWSHIP

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

The **Adult class** continues Season 3 of *The Chosen* with discussion following. *The Chosen* is a Christian TV series that tells the story of Jesus' 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.

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
 Last Lenten soup supper and Season 3 finale of *The Chosen* where Jesus walks on water.

Apr. 20 Easter – No Evening Fellowship

April 27, May 5, and May 11 – Dreaming Forward: Imagining our Future Together (See more details on page 2).

May 11 Is the last day for our Sunday night Faith Exploration series until this fall. Thanks to everyone who was involved in making this a success.



Genesis Bible Study Continues

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

We are exploring 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.

WORSHIP LOCATION: WORSHIP SERVICES through the end of June will be held at the Westminster Presbyterian Church campus, with the exception of Maundy Thursday and Palm Sunday, which will be held at the First Presbyterian Church campus downtown. Thank you for your flexibility as we unify our wonderful congregations!

Recent Attendance Report

DATE	IN PERSON	TOTAL (Includes Livestream)
Feb. 23	116	265
Mar. 2	115	187
Mar. 9	Not Available	105
Mar. 16	Not Available	65
Mar. 23	118	200

Westminster Financial Report As of February 28, 2025

Income.....	\$77,679.58
Expenses	\$76,852.36
Income over Expenses (loss)	(\$827.22)



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:

First and Third Week – Dubuque Food Pantry to help feed local families. (No egg cartons).

Second Week – Opening Doors. Items needed are: High efficiency laundry detergent, tall trash bags, Clorox disinfecting wipes, toilet paper, paper towels, Dawn soap, liquid hand soap, and personal items such as toothpaste, tooth brushes, etc.

Fourth Week – Dubuque Rescue Mission. Toiletry items: body wash/shampoo (no bars) toothbrushes/toothpaste, deodorant, underwear, granola bars, beef jerky, fruit snacks, Chapstick, first aid supplies, high efficiency laundry detergent (pods).

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



Know a Graduate?

We want to celebrate the amazing graduates in our lives! If you have a child, sibling, or someone close to you graduating high school or college this spring, please contact the church office with their information and a picture at administrator@wpcdbq.org.



One Great Hour of Sharing

Around the world, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. The three Presbyterian (PCUSA) programs supported by One Great Hour of Sharing – Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People – all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. This annual offering provides us a way to share God's love with our neighbors in need. One Great Hour of Sharing is the single, largest way Presbyterians come together for a better world. **We will collect this offering on Palm Sunday, April 13.** If we each give a little it will add up to a lot!

Our Church Again Certified as an Earth Care Congregation by the PC (USA)

Your Green Team is happy to report that our church has been certified for the 6th consecutive year as an **"Earth Care Congregation"** by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) This honor speaks to the great commitment that the church and our members have made to caring for God's creation.



To become an Earth Care Congregation, the congregation affirmed and put into practice an **"Earth Care Pledge"** to integrate environmental practices and thinking into all aspects of church life including worship, education, facilities, and outreach. We were one of 361 churches that earned this designation and chose to dedicate themselves to intentional care of God's earth this year. We are one of three Earth Care Congregations in the John Knox Presbytery.

Would you like to join in this mission? The Green Team meets on the 4th Thursday of odd months at 4:00 pm in the board room. We are a very friendly group, enjoy working together in this mission, and welcome all to join us. For more information about our earth care program contact Tom Stovall, Green Team Moderator, at tomstov@aol.com or (563) 581-7220.

For more information on the Earth Care Congregations program visit www.pcusa.org/earthcarecongregation.



Join Our Mission Garden Team

The gardening season is rapidly approaching. Our garden team grows produce that is donated to local food banks to help our neighbors in need.

During the gardening season we have a number of tasks that need to be accomplished including: planting, watering, harvesting, cleaning produce, cleaning up the kitchen, taking produce to the food pantry, cleaning tubs after produce is delivered, replanting as needed, and weeding. We are also constructing new raised beds.

If you are interested in helping, please contact Rich Henderson hs3eagles@gmail.com or Marsha Wilfong mwilfong62hr@hotmail.com.

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Give More Without Spending More

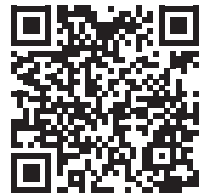
The concept is simple: Our church purchases Scrip gift cards from popular retailers at a discount. Members and friends then buy the gift cards from the church at face value.

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.

Scrip Workshop

Learn more about how purchasing scrip gift cards can help our church supplement the annual budget. All are welcome to attend **a scrip workshop after worship on May 4 in the Westminster board room. Learn about the advantages, different options and availability of gift cards and online purchasing. Look for more details in the Sunday bulletin after Easter.**

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



DONATE AN EASTER LILY



Every Easter our chancel area is decorated with beautiful lilies and hydrangeas, many of which are delivered to homebound church members after the Easter service. They are provided through the donations of our congregation, and the proceeds benefit the Deacons' Emergency Fund.

Lilies cost \$20 each. All orders must be received by Monday, April 13th.

If you would like to keep your flowers, please take them with you on Easter morning (April 20th) after the service.

Name _____ Phone _____

EASTER LILIES	AMOUNT
Lilies # _____ \$20 each	
Hydrangeas # _____ \$35 each	
Additional Donation (optional)	
I do not wish to order a flower, but want to donate to the Deacons' Emergency Fund.	
TOTAL	\$

Please drop in the offering plate, leave at the church office, or mail to:
Westminster Presbyterian Church, Deacons Easter Lilies
2155 University Avenue, Dubuque, IA 52001
Please be sure to mark your checks "lilies."

Please circle one: In Memory OR Honor of:

Please give to a Homebound Member:

THANK YOU!

The success of the faith exploration Sunday night fellowship has been due to many faithful volunteers. Thank you to the christian formation team, adult class leaders, and youth and elementary programming leaders.

A huge thank you to all of the volunteers who have helped prepare meals, serve, contribute food and clean up on Sunday nights.

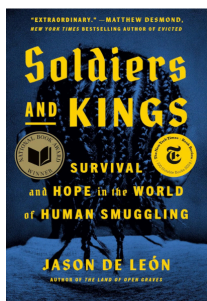


Hunger Outreach Helps Community

On March 22nd, 31 volunteers from First Presbyterian Church, Westminster Presbyterian Church, First Baptist Church, and the Dubuque community teamed up with St. Stephens Branch of the River Bend Foodbank in a Hunger Outreach event. Food was provided to our hungry and food-insecure neighbors. A total of 141 families (354 people) received over 7,556 lbs. of food. Food was also provided to the Dubuque Rescue Mission, and we gave 50 boxes of non-perishable food items to the University of Dubuque Student Food Pantry. **Thanks to all for putting their faith in action.**

Like to Read? Join Our Book Group

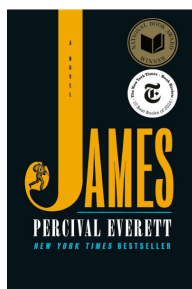
Join us in lively discussions on a different book each **third Wednesday of the month at 3:30 pm**. In February, Arlys Williams will host our group at Mt. Carmel Bluffs. See our list of reads by month:



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. **Meets April 16 at 3:30 in the WPC boardroom.**



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.

Calling All Kids!

Summer Sounds Music Camp is coming back to St. Luke's UMC and the Presbyterians are partnering with them!

The camp is happening June 23rd-27th, 2025, ending with a performance on Friday, June 27th at noon.

Camp classes include: Singing, Movement, Drumming, Instruments, Handbells, and Art.

This camp is designed for kids (kindergarten to 6th grade) who love or want to explore music and the arts!

With helpful camp counselors, church choir members, and music teachers, your kids will have a wonderful time learning new skills!

Cost is \$30 with a \$60 cap per family; our church (WPC/FPC) is covering half the cost per student/family, so when you go to register, just pay half, while being sure to indicate you are from the PC(USA) congregations.

Register and pay by going to:

<https://www.stlukesdbq.org/summersounds>

**summer
sounds**
music camp

**The Big Fish:
Jonah's Whale of a Tale**

**June 23rd-27th, 2025
9 am - 12 pm**

**Hosted by: St. Luke's United Methodist Church
1199 Main St. Dubuque, Iowa**

**In Collaboration With: First Presbyterian and
Westminster Presbyterian Churches**

Open to Kids Ages Kindergarten through 6th Grade

For more information & to sign up:

stlukesdbq.org/summersounds

Questions? Contact emmy@stlukesdbq.org



Make It Your Best Summer Ever at Bear Creek Camp!

BEAR CREEK CAMP, located in Wyoming, IA, is a Christian Summer Camp Programs for kids in grades K-12.

There are five different weeks to choose from:

June 15 – July 20. This year **ONLY** scholarships are available for every Westminster and First Church camper. Each camper pays \$100 registration fee, John Knox Presbytery will pay \$100, and our church will pay the balance. Pick up your scholarship forms on table outside of the WPC office.

Go to their website to sign up:

<https://bearcreek.camp/programs>

Synod School has Something for Everyone in Your Family

This summer there is an exciting adventure waiting for you and your whole family at Synod School 2025. This annual gathering of Presbyterians of all ages is sponsored by the Synod of Lakes and Prairies. It will be held on **July 20-25 (Sunday-Friday)** on the beautiful lakeside campus of Buena Vista University in Storm Lake, Iowa. It will be a week of inspiration, worship, study, play, and life together for around 500 people from all over the country.

The 2025 Synod School Catalog is available in the church office. It has complete details about this great event including all activities and registration information. The catalog and more information can also be accessed online at www.lakesandprairies.org/synod-school.

Let's Get Social!



Follow us on social media to get all the church news in a timely manner and join the conversation.

Just search for Westminster Dubuque.

Be sure to "like" or "follow" our pages.

Green Team Updates

RECYCLING – During the first 3 months of 2025 our recycling points at church have collected 327 prescription bottles, 35 pounds of batteries, and 48 cubic feet of plastic bags. Thanks to Tom and Judi Schutt for tracking and recycling those items for us.

GIVING UP PLASTIC BAGS FOR LENT – Thanks to all who are giving up plastic bags and vowing to use reusable bags when they shop. Remember, if you can give up those terrible plastic bags for Lent, you can do it all year long!

EARTH DAY WORSHIP SERVICE – On Sunday, April 27 members of the Green Team will assist in various parts of worship as we celebrate Earth Day and our theology of caring for God's Creation. Following worship, we will gather outdoors to share in a blessing of the soil and gardens.

APRIL 26 ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION – On Saturday, April 26 from 12:00 noon to 2:30 PM there will be an Arbor Day Celebration by Dubuque Trees Forever at the Dubuque Arboretum & Botanical Gardens. There will be all kinds of fun and educational events for the entire family. Please plan to attend.

MAY 10 TREE PLANTING HELP NEEDED – As part of our community outreach, the Green Team has made a commitment to assist Dubuque Trees Forever in the planting and care of fruit trees at a site being developed as an Neighborhood Orchard at the corner of Hill Street and Caledonia. On Saturday, May 10 we will be planting the trees beginning at 8:30 AM. Please plan to help out if you can.



Recycle

Become an avid recycler! Find out where you can recycle things that are not normally included in your city yellow bin. For example, you can recycle prescription bottles and batteries right here at church. Containers are in the narthex. The average life of a cell phone is about 18 months. It can be recycled and given life again!