

# ¡La Luz!

Westminster Presbyterian Church, Santa Fe



The Chamber Orchestra on Sunday December 31!

## Advent and Christmastide

We celebrated Advent and Christmastide this year using A Sanctified Art's theme: How does a weary world rejoice? Throughout the season, we explored different answers to that question, from singing stories of hope to trusting our belovedness. Of course, we also celebrated a number of more traditional Advent rituals as well. We gathered for a Longest Night service on the winter solstice, and for a candle-lit Christmas Eve service. On December 31, the Brinegars recruited a twelve-piece chamber orchestra for a service full of music! It has been a season of learning how this weary world rejoices, as we took time to both reflect on our weariness and practice rejoicing. Throughout this edition of *La Luz*, you will find photos from our congregational photographers that tell the story of our Advent season!

## Prayers for Our Congregation

Joe Dudziak  
 Jim Elliott  
 Elizabeth Ethelbah  
 Carol and Richard Fallis  
 Lawrence, Julia, Isabel, and  
 Carmen Gallegos  
 Gerald and Gabriella Garcia  
 Orlando Garcia  
 David Garcia and David Naylor  
 Harold Garcia  
 Phoebe Girard and David  
 Anderson  
 Rev. Jan Gough  
 Sylvia Graft

*Over the course of the year, all members and friends of Westminster will appear on this list. Please hold them in prayer, knowing they will hold you in prayer.*

## Birthdays!

1/7: Elizabeth Roghair  
 1/9: Magda Guzman  
 1/18: Georgia Ortiz  
 1/19: Grace Nadell  
 1/20: Liz Ethelbah  
 1/23: Consuelo Walker  
 1/24 Milee Griego-Rotunno  
 1/30: Jo Ann Padilla  
 1/30: Jim Roghair  
 1/15: Nancy Deever  
 1/17: Amos Padilla  
 1/19: Jan Gough

## QUERIDO WESTMINSTER:

Happy New Year! I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas season, and have started the New Year with good health, cheer, and loved ones near.

On the last Sunday of the year, I challenged all of you to imagine rituals you might take on in the new year, instead of resolutions. Rituals help create the patterns of our lives - they're like habits, in a way, except unlike habits, we put intention and a certain mindful quality into our rituals. For myself, one small ritual I have added to my life in the new year is sitting and drinking my tea in the morning quiet. I don't rush around; I don't take it 'to-go'; I don't put on a podcast or music. I prepare the cup of tea with close attention to what I am doing; I let it cool and while it cools I let my mind wander. I drink it slowly, and I wash my cup when I'm done. A few mornings a week, I do a short meditative practice while my tea cools instead of just letting my mind wander. The whole thing takes maybe twenty minutes - I can nearly always find twenty minutes in my morning! And it sets me up for a day that began in a calm centered place. I hope that you are able to either turn a regular routine into a ritual, or to create a small ritual that gives you peace and a moment of intention in your day!

If you've looked at a calendar, you may have noticed that Lent begins early this year! The Season of Lent is a moveable season - it's always the same length, but the start date varies widely. The start of Lent is determined by counting backwards from Easter - and the date for Easter is the first full moon on or after the spring equinox. That date, this year, is Sunday March 31, which means we will celebrate Ash Wednesday on February 14. This year, we are keeping Lent with Christ Lutheran Church. Last year, we worshiped with them on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and at the Easter Vigil. This year, they'll host Ash Wednesday at noon, and we'll host at 6. We'll gather for a mid-week Lenten conversation, hosted Wednesdays here at Westminster (time TBD). And we'll worship together for Holy Week as well - Christ Lutheran will host Maundy Thursday and the Easter Vigil; we'll host Good Friday. This is a wonderful opportunity to spend time with a congregation much like ours - they are small and tend to be an older congregation, but more importantly, they too are deeply concerned with social justice and mission. I hope you will join us for worship and for conversation as we strengthen our relationship with our siblings-in-Christ from Christ Lutheran!

Bendiciones,  
Rev. Madeline

P.S. As of the first of this month, my schedule has changed! After discussion with Personnel and Session, I will be taking Mondays and Tuesdays off and working Wednesday-Sunday, in-office Wednesday and Thursday, as well as most Fridays. This will allow me to have a full 'weekend' for rest, recreation, and restoration. Just a few weeks in and I am so grateful for this shift to my schedule that brings me to Wednesday restored and ready for another week!

### MADLINE'S SCHEDULE:

Office hours: Wednesday - Friday, 9:30-1:30; Saturdays by appointment. Monday and Tuesday are my days off!

I will be away February 23-25.

If you have an emergency on my days off, please call my cell phone or send me a text.



Jenny Lasley, lighting the first Advent Candle



The Brinegars, lighting the second Advent Candle



Cindy Piatt, lighting the third Advent Candle



All candles lit, by the Chavez/Nadell family, for Christmas Eve

## A Holiday Update on the Ibrahimis!

Cindy Piatt

I have been visiting part of my family in the east for several years now at Christmas. I realized that our Afghan family who had relocated to Baltimore this past summer, the Ibrahimis, only lived a 2 hour drive from my sister's home in Pennsylvania. They were absolutely delighted when I mentioned that I would consider coming to see them in their new apartment if the timing worked out. My sister was excited to meet them also, so we arranged to drive down after Christmas. It was a rainy, dismal day, but we had no trouble finding their home. Greeted with hugs around and smiles galore, their first question when we had our coats off was, "Are you staying for the night?" Lori and I were both shocked and just laughed.

We had a very warm and amazing time being hosted in their home in the traditional Afghani way. Tea and nuts to begin with, bread being made as we drove, and a full course meal to share after an hour of talking. I took a grocery bag of fresh veggies and fruits to share with them. Even Sarajuddin, the father, came home from work to spend time with us. All of the kids are speaking quite good English at this point and thoroughly engaged in school. The youngest, Zuhul, didn't talk while we were there, being shy at 2, but Gul Shah told me that she only speaks English at home now and no Dari! Sema showed me her report card from the 2nd marking period, showing off all A's and B's in a regular 9th grade curriculum. I was so proud of her. Bashir had a good report card too, with a mixture of grades. He's doing well also, but could do better in one subject if he didn't "chat so much" according to the report card comment. He didn't know what that meant, so my sister and I made sure that he understood that word and told him we knew he could do better!



Gul Shah, especially, was so thrilled to see us as she has not made friends while being there so far. The children all have friends from school and in the Afghan community. Saraj is driving for Uber and they seem to be doing well. Their apartment is much nicer (and less expensive) than the one they had here in Santa Fe. That was good to see. They also live only a 5 minute walk from a nearby park, which they visit frequently when the weather is nicer.

I am so glad that we made the trip and they were absolutely thrilled that we came. A real blessing from the holidays!

## The Longest Night: Worship for the Weary



The path to the sanctuary, glowing warm with welcome



We wrote our prayers down on cards, and shared them with each other, praying for each other in the week to come. Then we lit candles, for our prayer requests or simply to remind ourselves that it only takes a small light to illuminate.



Keri and Michael Brinegar, along with Marianne Lewis at the piano, played the music for our service, helping to create a contemplative space as we gathered on the Longest Night and held space for grief and weariness.

## Weekly Taizé

With the start of the program year, Taizé has returned to their weekly schedule, meeting on Thursdays at 5:30pm in the sanctuary. We are grateful for the chance to be together in person once again as we share this time of reflection together. On January 4, we ran our first test of our hybrid option, and we look forward to refining that opportunity for worship together!



## Contemplative Worship

**Taizé:** A brief prayer service in the style of the Taizé Brothers in France is held on Thursdays at 5:30pm. It is a time of scripture, prayer, chants and silence. If you'd like the link for the livestream, or to be added to the Taizé email list, please contact the church office at [wpcsantafe@gmail.com](mailto:wpcsantafe@gmail.com).

**Second Saturday Quiet Space:** On the second Saturday of the month, we gather at 10am for a creative and contemplative gathering. Quiet Space is a time for creativity and contemplation; every month will be a different experience.



The Bell Choir, dir. Donna Clark, plays on the 2nd Sunday of Advent

## Holistic Ministry in Madagascar: Evangelism, Food Security, Creation Care and Health

**12:30pm Sunday January 21, at First Presbyterian**

All are invited to a lunch and program with Dan Turk, Mission Co-worker of the Presbyterian Church (USA) assigned to Madagascar working with the Fruits, Vegetables, and Environmental Education Program of the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar. Dan will speak at the 8:30am service at First Presbyterian Church and introduce himself with a "minute for mission" at the 11:00am service at Westminster Presbyterian Church.

Dan Turk has spent nearly 30 years working in Madagascar—an island nation that has some of the greatest biodiversity in the world but also one of the highest levels of poverty. For the past 26 years as a Mission Co-worker of the Presbyterian Church (USA), Dan has served in partnership with the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar (FKJM), working with their Fruits, Vegetables, and Environmental Education Program (FVEE). The FVEE provides internships for university students and training for seminary students, church pastors and members, and farmers who learn to grow and graft fruit trees to improve their food security and income. He and his Malagasy colleagues in the FVEE also propagate native trees of exceptional educational value both for sale to expand their programs and for planting at schools, churches, and other public places to increase appreciation of Madagascar's rich biodiversity. An avid botanist, he founded the Ranomafana Arboretum in 2007 and has named three new species of trees.

Dan and his wife Elizabeth are members of Decatur Presbyterian Church in Georgia. We are delighted to welcome them to Santa Fe!



### 2024 FRIDGE MAGNET CALENDARS

A reminder that we have 2024 Fridge Magnet Calendars available for all members and friends of Westminster. You can put them on your refrigerator, dishwasher, microwave, oven, metal file cabinet, or any other magnetized surface.

If you haven't already picked one up, we will have some at the greeter's kiosk on Sunday mornings and on the table in the hallway near Koinonia Hall. And remember, once 2024 is in the history books, simply cut off the calendar portion and you'll have a Westminster magnet to display for years to come!

## **Dec 31: Worshiping with a Chamber Orchestra!**

What a gift and blessing we received! A huge thank you to all the musicians, and especially to Keri and Michael Brinegar who helped make this happen and get it all organized!





## A brief report from Dec. 10 Congregational Meeting

The Session of Westminster called a congregational meeting for the purposes of electing the 2024 slate of church officers and approving the 2024 Pastoral Terms of Call. We are delighted to report that Fred Dennis was elected to serve as Deacon (class of 2026), Cindy Piatt and Michael Brinegar were elected to serve as Ruling Elders (class of 2026), and Michael, Sylvia Graft, Elizabeth Roghair, and Gerzain Chavez were elected to serve as the 2024 Nominating Committee. In addition, Madeline's 2024 Terms of Call were approved by the congregation.

We are so grateful for all who serve as leaders in our congregation, and especially for the service of those elders and deacons who have completed their service: Keri Brinegar (Ruling Elder), Margi Coxwell (Ruling Elder; Nominating Committee), Donna Ormerod (Deacon), and Michael Brinegar (Deacon). Thank you!!

**We ordained Fred Dennis as a deacon and installed him to that office, along with the installations of Cindy Piatt and Michael Brinegar to the office of ruling elder, on Sunday January 7!**



The congregation singing along with the Chamber Orchestra!

## Lent 2024

We will gather with Christ Lutheran Church again during Lent this year, including with a mid-week devotional gathering! During Lent, we'll read from the gospels of Matthew and John on Sundays, and during the week, we'll move through an offering from the Congregational Ministry Committee of the Rocky Mountain Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (Christ Lutheran's regional body!) called "Why Church? A Discussion Series for Congregations." While this resource is aimed at ELCA congregations, us PC(USA) folks will also get a lot out of it!

### Ash Wednesday Worship

Noon at Christ Lutheran Church  
6pm at Westminster Presbyterian

### Sundays in Lent

11am at Westminster  
Presbyterian,  
in person and online

### Mid-Week Lenten Gathering

Wednesday evenings at Westminster Presbyterian  
Light supper and discussion from "Why Church?" Resource  
(time TBD; look for an email by the end of the month)

### Maundy Thursday

Christ Lutheran Church  
time TBD, Mar. 28

### Good Friday

Westminster  
6pm, Mar. 29

### Easter Vigil

Christ Lutheran  
Church  
Time TBD, Mar. 30

Christ is risen! Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!  
Easter Sunday Worship at Westminster  
11am, March 31, in person and online

## Ordination and Installation of New Officers: January 7, 2024



On Sunday January 7, the Session examined, ordained, and installed Cindy Piatt and Michael Brinegar as Ruling Elders and Fred Dennis as Deacon. We are delighted to welcome these new and returning leaders as officers of the congregation!

During worship, as we ordained and installed Fred, Michael, and Cindy, for the first time since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, we were able to include the 'laying on of hands.' This tradition reminds those newly ordained and installed of all those who have gone before, who are there to support them as they begin their work. All who have been ordained as ruling elders, deacons, or ministers of word and sacrament, are invited to participate - and at Westminster, that's nearly the whole congregation!





Our Angel Tree, overflowing with gifts for the Santa Fe Youth Shelters and Family Services.

## WESTMINSTER'S STAFF AND LEADERS

- Pastor: Rev. Madeline Hart-Andersen: [rev.madeline.wpcsantafe@gmail.com](mailto:rev.madeline.wpcsantafe@gmail.com)  
 Office Administrator: Vickie Ortega: [wpc.santafe@gmail.com](mailto:wpc.santafe@gmail.com)  
 Clerk of Session: Keri Brinegar: [clerk.wpcsantafe@gmail.com](mailto:clerk.wpcsantafe@gmail.com)  
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