

Hello Neighbor!

Third Sunday of Easter
April 19, 2026



In a world that too often teaches us to fear one another, we gather to remember that every person we meet is our neighbor, worthy of love, dignity, and care. Grounded in the gentle wisdom of Mister Rogers and the radical command of Christ, we practice a way of being that listens deeply, welcomes freely, and loves boldly. In such a time as this, worship forms us into people who will go out and build not walls, but neighborhoods of grace, justice, and belonging.

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

**please stand as you're able*

PRELUDE

(text found at hymn 401)

Fantasy on Marty Haugen's Gather Us In, H. Doktorski¹

WELCOME

***CALL TO WORSHIP** - *Words of Fred Rogers*

One: The sun is up and so are we, all set to start the day.

All: We're wide awake and ready now, God will you please show the way?

One: You've kept us safe the whole night through, please guide us all day long.

All: Give us a smile for everyone, a word of cheer, a song.

One: Is there a job for us to do, a special task, a test?

All: With help from you we hope we too can make this day our best!

One: Good morning sun, good morning sky, we greet you with a nod.

All: This day will be our special day, a good, good morning, God.

*HYMN

Christ, You Offer Us Your Welcome, Beach Spring²

1. Christ, you offer us your welcome; it's a precious gift you give!
You bring reconciliation and you show us how to live.
You call poor ones from their sadness, you call rich ones from their pride.
You call people who are outcast, telling all to "Come inside!"

2. In a world that's often fearful, where so many stand alone,
you invite us to your table and you welcome people home.
Then you point us to the strangers that, it seems, nobody sees,
and you say, "These are your neighbors. I am here, in each of these."

3. You have given us a mission — to invite our neighbors in —
and your call to love and listen is a place we can begin.
We need more than open houses; we need, first, to give our hearts.
By your Spirit, make us servants; that's the way your welcome starts.

4. May we set a welcome table, may we find a common ground
where no one will feel they're labeled, where acceptance can be found.
We don't need to entertain there, or to do things that impress —
just to hear folks' joy and pain there, and to love so all are blest.

5. Christ, your call to offer welcome is an urgent, mighty call;
you have given us a vision of your Way that welcomes all.
May we seek to meet our neighbors in their vast diversity.
As your loved and welcomed people, may we build community.

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy God, our Neighbor and our Friend, you have shown us many ways to say "I love you," yet we build fences where you are building neighborhoods. Forgive us for the times we did not listen, for the times we did not welcome, for the times we forgot that every person we meet is our beloved neighbor. Teach us again how to love with patience, justice, and mercy. Make us good neighbors, reflecting the steady love you have always had for us. AMEN!

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

***PASSING THE PEACE**

Everyone longs to be loved. And the greatest thing we can do is to let people know that they are loved and capable of loving. -Mr. Rogers

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

HYMN 399

*God Welcomes All, Themba Amen*³

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Neighbor God, on this beautiful day in this neighborhood, quiet our racing thoughts and steady our hearts. Help us listen to your Word with curiosity instead of judgment, with courage instead of fear. Teach us something today that will help us grow into kinder, braver, more loving people. AMEN!

SCRIPTURES

Proverbs 3:27-32

Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to do it. Do not say to your neighbor, "Go and come again; tomorrow I will give it," when you have it with you.

Do not plan harm against your neighbor who lives trustingly beside you.

Do not quarrel with anyone without cause, when no harm has been done to you.

Do not envy the violent, and do not choose any of their ways, for the perverse are an abomination to the Lord, but the upright are in his confidence.

Exodus 20:12-17

"Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

"You shall not murder.

"You shall not commit adultery.

"You shall not steal.

"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

"You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, male or female slave, ox, donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

After the message, children may go with the teacher to room 11 for Spiritual Adventures.

SCRIPTURE

Mark 12:28-34

One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well he asked him, "Which commandment is the first of all?" Jesus answered, "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." Then the scribe said to him, "You are right, Teacher; you have truly said that 'he is one, and besides him there is no other'; and 'to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength' and 'to love one's neighbor as oneself'—this is much more important than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." When Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." After that no one dared to ask him any question.

SERMON

Won't We Be Neighbors?

*HYMN 762

*When the Poor Ones, El Camino*⁴

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Mr. Rogers rose at 5 am for prayer every day, but before he got into the pool for his 7:30 am swim, he would sing "Jubilate Deo, Rejoice in the Lord Always!" before he dove in.

HYMN 155

*Raise a Song of Gladness, Taizé Ecumenical Community*⁵

CALL TO DISCIPLESHIP

When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, "Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping." -Fred Rogers

CALL FOR THE OFFERING - *Please also pass the friendship form through the row. Bring coins! All change collected will go to a mission project chosen by the children.*

OFFERTORY

*For Everyone Born, arr. T. Trenney*⁶

*DOXOLOGY HYMN 607

*Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow, Old Hundred*⁷

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise Christ, all people here below; praise Holy Spirit evermore; praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION, LORD'S PRAYER

*HYMN

Jesus, Teach Us to Be Neighbors, Mc Feely⁸



instrumental interlude 1. Je - sus, teach us to be neigh-bors,
2. Je - sus, teach us to be neigh-bors,
3. Je - sus, teach us to be neigh-bors,



liv - ing, lov - ing side by side, hands for help - ing
giv - ing, serv - ing those in need, mak - ing peace and
work - ing, pray - ing for the day when the Lamb will



one an - oth - er, arms of wel - come, o - pen wide.
do - ing jus - tice, shar - ing faith in word and deed.
be the Shep-herd, when our tears are washed a - way.



Ev - er learn - ing, ev - er grow-ing, Je - sus, teach us
Ev - er learn - ing, ev - er grow-ing, Je - sus, teach us
Ev - er learn - ing, ev - er grow-ing, Je - sus, teach us



all to be chil - dren of the new cre - a - tion,
all to be chil - dren of the new cre - a - tion,
all to be chil - dren of the new cre - a - tion,



joined in true com-mu - ni - ty.
where we are one fam - i - ly.
sing - ing praise in har - mo - ny.

instrumental interlude

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

In Christ There Is No East or West, arr. M. Hassell⁹

The postlude is offered as a grateful thanks to God. We invite you to remain seated as we listen together.

Leaders Today



Guest Preacher: Rev. Dr. Matt Sauer

Liturgist: Paul Thompson

Interim Pastor: Rev. Sara Tonje

Minister of Music: Joe Chrisman

Children's Ministries: Amy Poland

AV/Tech: John Tarr/Josh Mou

Ushers/Greeters: Joyce Buseman, Richard Appen, Judy Graham, Kathy Key (Deacon)

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Artwork

The "Good Neighbors" artwork displayed was gifted to Westminster Presbyterian by Ms. Pagel's K-1st, and 3rd grade REACH classes at Thoreau Elementary School.

WPC ANNOUNCEMENTS

Guest preacher and leader today

Rev. Matt Sauer has served for two decades in Manitowoc. He has worked to unify congregations across denominational lines, lifted up voices of rural communities, challenged Christian nationalism, and modeled public faith that promotes equity, compassion, and democracy. He has been a founding presence in Manitowoc Warming Shelter, and the Free Community Dinners. He serves on the Wisconsin Council of churches. He is married to Meredith, and father to Olivia and Josh. He is a preacher that combines prophetic critique with a Mr. Rogers gentleness. Welcome Pastor Matt.



June 21 Concert at Westminster - Make Music Madison

Sing with Westminster Presbyterian for Make Music Madison on June 21, 2026 at 4:00PM. We invite you to add your voice in harmony! Everyone welcome! Music available today. Join us for Wednesday rehearsals 5/27-6/17 from 6-7PM.

Church Outing: Nightmares Softball Game

All are invited to the game on Saturday, June 17th at 6:05pm! Details and sign up to come.

Vacation Bible School (VBS)

When: August 3-6; 9am-noon at Christ Presbyterian Church
For : Children grades K and up! (youth and adult volunteers)
All are welcome to this free and engaging camp! More details to come.

Women's Retreat

Save the date for the 5th Annual Women's Retreat at Holy Wisdom Monastery. This year the Rev. Jessica Salt will be leading the retreat on Saturday, September 26.

One Great Hour of Sharing Update

Thank you to everyone who "fished" around for change and donated to One Great Hour of Sharing. We collected almost 20 pounds of coins, raising \$192! These funds are used by the PCUSA to help the millions of people worldwide who lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity.

Calling All Grads!

If your child or grandchild is graduating from high school or college, we'd love to celebrate them in our June newsletter. Please send their name, school and any plans after graduation to Katie no later than May 24 at info@westminstermadison.org. Thanks!

Workday at Joining Forces For Families (2225 Allied Dr # 2) May 12 starting at 9 AM

Our congregation is a member of Allied Partners, an interfaith coalition of congregations and community organizations working together to strengthen relationships, address basic needs, and promote equity in the culturally, racially, and economically diverse Allied Dunn's Marsh neighborhood.

As a partner, we work closely with the other faith-based members and neighborhood service organizations, including the neighborhood Social Worker at Joining Forces for Families (JFF). That office connects families in the neighborhood by collaborating with local partners, including Allied Partners.

We have been offered the opportunity to "spruce up" the JFF office in the Allied neighborhood. This work includes yard work, painting and shelf installation. For details and to sign up, click on the link in the weekly email announcement or see the sign up sheet outside of the MJB lounge. Please contact Eileen Ahearn with questions. Thanks!

Congregational Care Updates

- Did you know that if you're hospitalized, the hospital will not contact the church? If you might like a visit from the pastor or a deacon, please call the church office or contact Kate Fletcher after hours. We want to be there for you.
- We're seeking a tablecloth wrangler: someone willing to organize our collection of tablecloths and launder them occasionally. If you enjoy imposing order, handling fabrics, and the tangible satisfaction of washing and ironing, contact Kate.

IN OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

Care List: Nancy Prine, Barbara Vogelsang, Bob Klassy, Bill & Sue Bridson

Members & Friends: Ledger Dalton, Doug Halls (knee surgery), Mary Ihlenfeldt & family

The Memorial for Lee Ihlenfeldt will be Saturday, May 16. Visitation starts at 9:30am with the service at 11:00am.

Treat Bakers: we are in need of desserts (cookies, bars, brownies, fruit) for Lee's memorial. If you are able to help, please sign up on the table outside of the MJB lounge or contact the church office. Thank you!