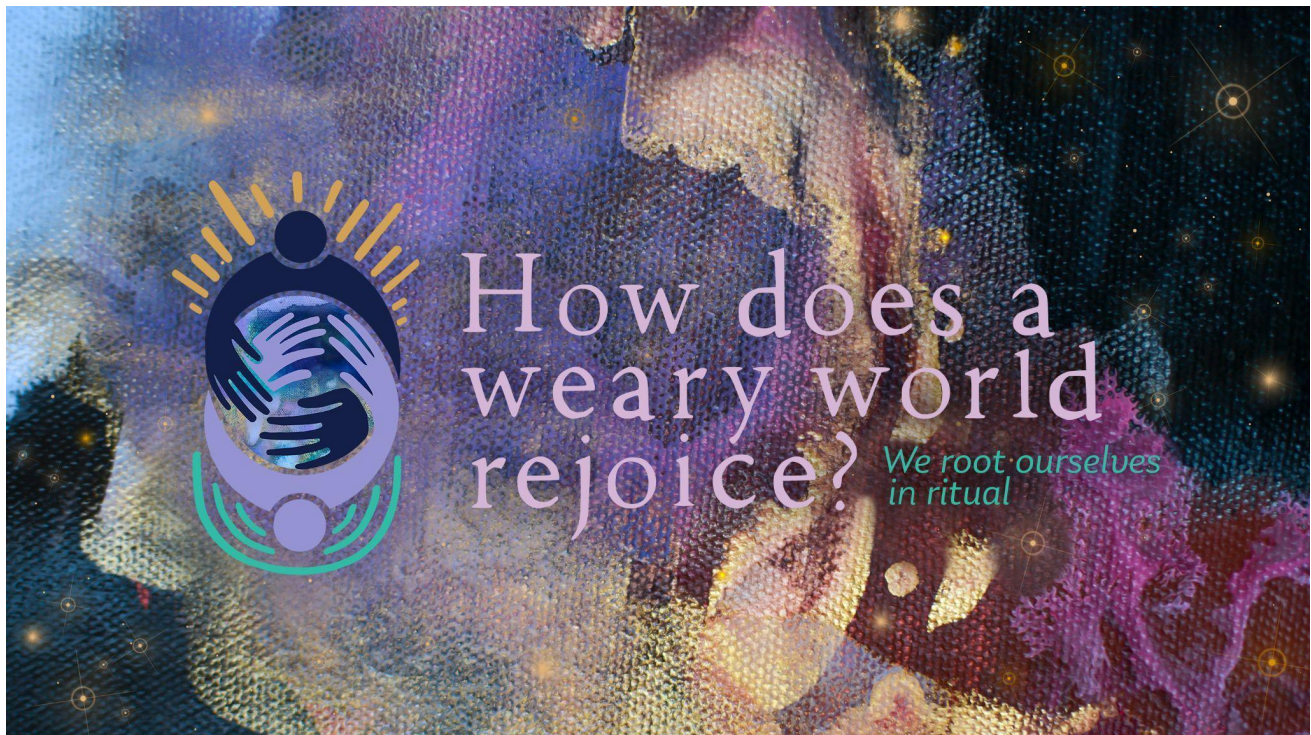




# Eastminster Presbyterian Church

**Service for the Lord's Day  
December 31, 2023**



# WELCOME!

Whether you are a member or a visitor, worshiping with us in-person or online, you are welcome here.

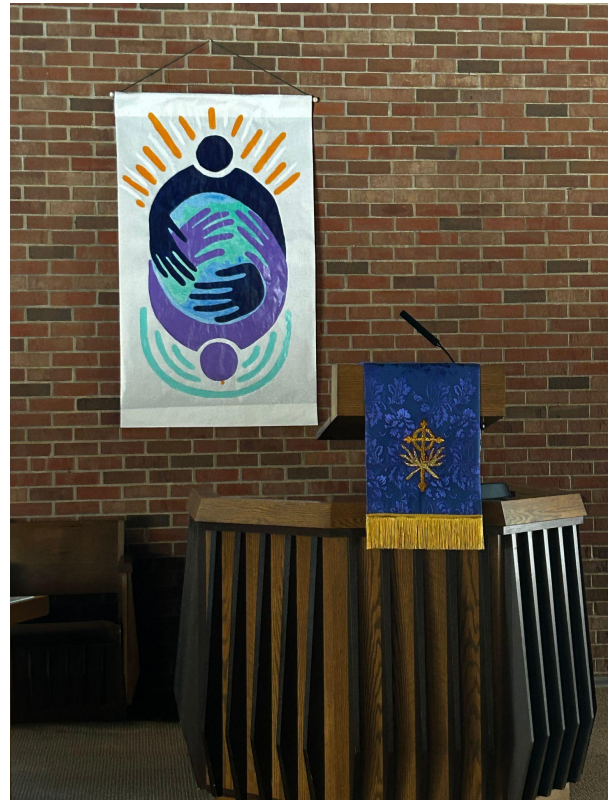
Information about our church is found in the narthex or online: [eastminsterchurch.org](http://eastminsterchurch.org). At the welcome table or on our website, you can sign up for our weekly emails.

Masks are available at the welcome table for those who would like to wear them.

Children are always welcome in worship at Eastminster. Your child can sit with you in the pew or sit in the space created for children at the front of the sanctuary.

Hymn books and Bibles can be found under the pews.

This is a livestream worship service, and the camera and microphones are on the whole time. While the camera is most often focused on the front of the sanctuary, there is a chance that you will be captured on camera.



*\* Congregation is invited to rise in body or in spirit.  
**Bold text** is read or sung by the congregation.*

**ORDER OF WORSHIP FOR THE LORD'S DAY**  
**1st Sunday of Christmas**

December 31, 2023

10:00 a.m.

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**GATHERING**

**Prelude**

**Welcome & Announcements**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.  
*And also with you.*

**\*Call to Worship**

L. Every year we celebrate Christmas.

*P. Every month we break bread.*

L. Every week we gather for worship.

*P. Every day we count our blessings.*

L. Every minute God is near.

*P. Yes, every minute God is near.*

L. These are the rituals of our faith.

*P. Let us worship Holy God.*

**\*Hymn #105**      People, Look East

**\*Call to Confession**

**\*Prayer of Confession**

*God of seasons and days, of observances and celebrations,  
You gave us Advent to summon our courage, and Christmas  
to satisfy our hopes.*

*Forgive us for receiving them lightly and observing them casually.  
As we neglect ritual, our faith loses its way.*

*As we forget the stories of our faith, we lose our grounding.  
Return us to this familiar space again and again  
to hear what we know by heart and sing of what we know is true.  
With grateful and humble hearts we pray,  
Amen.*

**\*Silent Confession**

**\*Assurance of Pardon**

**\*Sung Response** *Doxology for a Weary World*

CRANHAM ("In the Bleak Midwinter")

Text: Anna Strickland (2023)

Music: Gustav Holst (1906)



Praise the one Cre - a - tor, praise the Liv-ing Christ



Praise the Ho-ly Spi - rit, praise both day and night



Praise when you are wea - ry, praise in times of joy



Praise, my soul, with all your strength and your heart and voice

**\*Passing of the Peace** *(Share the peace of Christ with the person next to you)*

## **PROCLAIMING THE WORD**

### **Children's Sermon**

**Hymn #109** [remain seated]      **Blest Be the God of Israel**

### **Prayer for Illumination**

**Old Testament Reading**      **Psalm 148** [*The Message*]

Hallelujah! Praise GOD from heaven, praise him from the mountaintops;  
*Praise him, all you his angels, praise him, all you his warriors,*  
Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, you morning stars;  
*Praise him, high heaven, praise him, heavenly rain clouds;*  
Praise, oh let them praise the name of GOD —  
he spoke the word, and there they were!  
*He set them in place from all time to eternity;*  
*He gave his orders, and that's it!*  
Praise GOD from earth, you sea dragons, you fathomless ocean deeps;  
*Fire and hail, snow and ice, hurricanes obeying his orders;*  
Mountains and all hills, apple orchards and cedar forests;  
*Wild beasts and herds of cattle, snakes, and birds in flight;*  
Earth's kings and all races, leaders and important people;  
*Robust men and women in their prime,*  
*and yes, graybeards and little children.*  
Let them praise the name of GOD—it's the only Name worth praising.  
*His radiance exceeds anything in earth and sky;*  
*he's built a monument—his very own people!*  
Praise from all who love GOD! Israel's children, intimate friends of GOD.  
*Hallelujah!*

**Scripture Reading**      **Luke 2:22-40**

**Sermon**      **A Curious Catalog of God's Intimates**

## **RESPONDING TO THE WORD**

### **Time of Reflection**

**\*Affirmation of Faith**

*We believe that faith is a journey  
marked by rituals and rhythms.*

*We come to worship.*

*We confess our sins.*

*We pass the peace.*

*We offer grace.*

*We hear the Word.*

*We baptize children.*

*We break the bread.*

*And we tell the story  
of a loving God.*

*And through these sacred rituals,  
we are reminded:  
we are not alone.*

*God is near,*

*and we have work to do.*

*May this belief  
shape the rhythm of our lives.  
Amen.*

**Pastoral Prayer & 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.*

**\*Hymn #546** Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing

**\*Charge & Benediction** *The Canticle of Simeon*

*Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping,  
That awake we may watch with Christ,  
And asleep rest in his peace.*

Now, Lord, you let your servant go in peace,



Your word has been fulfilled. My own eyes have seen the salvation  
Which you have prepared in the sight of every people:  
A light to reveal you to the nations  
And the glory of your people Israel.  
*Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping,  
That awake we may watch with Christ,  
And asleep rest in his peace.*  
Go in peace.

## **\*Postlude**

### **Participants in today's service:**

Guest Preacher: Rev. Dr. Jeffrey O'Neill

Worship Leader: Sam O'Neill

Pianist: Tamar Mikeladze

Worship Credits: The liturgy is by A Sanctified Art and used with permission; Hymns are printed and streamed with permission from One License #A-725831.

Today we welcome our own Rev. Dr. Jeffrey O'Neill as a guest preacher.  
Pastor Kristin is currently on vacation and will return on January 2nd.

### **Usher**

Head Usher: Brenda Ramsby

### **Greeter**

Estelle McGroarty

### **Video Producer**

Susan Smalley

### **Church Leadership and Staff**

Rev. Kristin Stroble

Pastor

Rev. Shirley Paxton

Parish Advisor

Neil Myer

Director of Christian Education

Bridgette Redman

Office Administrator

Tamar Mikeladze

Organist

## **This Week at Eastminster:**

*December 31, 2023 through January 7, 2024*

### **SUNDAY, 12/31**

Worship	10:00 a.m.
Fellowship	11:00 a.m.

### **MONDAY, 1/1 HAPPY NEW YEAR**

Office Closed

### **THURSDAY, 1/4**

Infrastructure Meeting	2:30 p.m.
Young Adult Gathering	7:00 p.m.

### **SUNDAY, 1/7**

Worship	10:00 a.m.
Congregational Meeting	11:00 a.m.
All-Church Lunch	11:15 a.m.
Community Bell Rehearsal	4:00 p.m.

*Neil Myer will be out of the office at Montreat all week. He will return on Sunday, Jan. 7.*

### **All-Church Lunch—January 7**

We will be having an all-church lunch next Sunday after worship. We will be handing out star words at that time.

### **Advent House**

Advent House has requested that during the winter months we return to providing soups and salads for our neighbors experiencing homelessness. The sign-up sheet is in the narthex. We need people to bring soup, items for sandwiches, and to help assemble the sandwiches on Saturday, January 13th.

### **Congregational Meeting—January 7**

We will be holding a congregational meeting on Jan. 7 after worship for the purpose of electing an elder to fill an open position. Our annual congregational meeting in which we receive financial reports and vote on the pastor's terms of call will be on Jan. 28.



## **Housewarming Celebration for Tamar and Alex Mikeladze**

Please join us on **Sunday, January 14** during Fellowship Hour as the Deacons host a housewarming celebration of Tamar and Alex Mikeladze's recent and long-awaited move to their new home. As a way to show our appreciation to both of them, we are collecting monetary donations ahead of the celebration to present them with a gift card from the congregation. Please consider donating any amount within your budget by writing a check to Beverly Bonning (memo line: Tamar's housewarming) or placing cash in an envelope with your name, the purpose, and depositing it in the black lock box outside of Bridgette's office. All donations are welcome.

## **Interfaith Security Donations**

Many of you may have heard that Congregation Shaarey Zedek was the victim of a bomb threat last weekend. We are still taking donations to help defray security costs for our Jewish and Muslim neighbors at Shaarey Zedek, Kehillat Israel and the Islamic Center of Greater Lansing. All donations will be split equally between the congregations. Donations can be given as a check to the church or online. Please designate that the gift is for "Interfaith Security Funds."



**Scan the QR code with your phone to donate online to Eastminster Presbyterian Church and its ongoing ministries.**



### **Poinsettia Dedications**

<b>Given By</b>	<b>In Memory Of</b>
Bruce Augenstein	Sue Augenstein
Barb Dalzell	John Dalzell
Dan and Judy Dickinson	May and Emory Bates Maxine and Bill Dickinson
Ted Hagan	Pat Hagan Dr. Ray Hagan Our parents
Linda and Tom Hardenbergh	Our parents
Suzanne and Chase Hunt	David Hunt Mr. and Mrs. Clarence O. Mahn, Sue's parents Mr. and Mrs. George G. Hunt, Chase's parents
George and Sue Miller	Our parents
Jeff and Sam O'Neill	Our parents Rev. Robert and Carol O'Neill Tom and Jan McGowan
Brenda Ramsby	My parents, Bill and Joyce Travis