**Southminster Presbyterian Church**

**3rd Sunday after Epiphany**

**January 21, 2024**

**9:30 a.m.**

Find the link for the service on one of these sites:

1) on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SouthminsterGlenEllyn/>
2) our YouTube channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPgWICngOvkmR1OXgCG_wiA/live>

3) our web site: <https://www.southminsterpc.org/>

If the video feed is interrupted during the service, we will continue to record and then post the full video on Facebook and our web site as soon as possible.

 Gathering Music

Our Photo Story today is “Artists’ Reception.”

 Welcome, Announcements, and Moment for Mission

 Lighting the Candles (John 13:34)

**“I give you a new commandment, that you love one another.
Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.”**

  Improvisational Prelude

[Please remain seated while singing the opening songs.]

 Hymn 175: *Seek Ye First* (all 3 verses)

 Hymn 401: *Here in This Place (Gather Us In)* (verses 1, 3)

 Call to Worship

 Leader: We enter this sacred space

 **People: To voice the longings of our hearts in prayer.**

 Leader: In the company of sacred gathering,

 **People: We offer our love to the Holy One.**

 **All:** **We worship God together.**

 Hymn 171: *A Sower Came from Ancient Hills* (all 4 verses)

 Prayer of Confession: (unison)

**Lord God, we forget to listen; forgive us. Help us tend the soil of our souls so that we may grow in the knowledge of your love for all people. We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

 (Time of silence for personal prayer and confession)

 Declaration of God’s Grace/The Good News of Jesus Christ (1 John 4:7-21)

 Leader: Beloved, let us love one another.

 **People: Love is from God.**

 Leader: Whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.

 **All: In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven,**

 **because God is love. Alleluia!**

 Response 582: *Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me*

**Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,**

**And to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,**

**And to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.**

**As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.**

**World without end, without end. Amen.**

**World without end, without end. Amen.**

**World without end, without end. Amen.**

**As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.**

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 The Passing of the Peace

 Word with Children: (Blair Baldwin)

 Children worshiping in the sanctuary, please come forward.

As children leave the sanctuary:

 *Lord, Prepare Me (Sanctuary)*  (sing 1 time) Hymnal 701

**Lord, prepare me
To be a sanctuary,
Pure and holy,
Tried and true.
With thanksgiving
I'll be a living
Sanctuary for you.**

CCLI Song # 24140

John W. Thompson | Randy Scruggs

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 Prayer for Illumination

 Scripture Lessons:  Mark 4:1-9 Pew Bible, p. 38, N.T.)

 Mark 4:21-29 Pew Bible, p. 38 (N.T.)

 Mark 4:30-34 Pew Bible, p. 38 (N.T.)

 Sermon: “Listen”

 Saying What We Believe/Affirmation of Faith (unison)
 from *The Confession of 1967* (PCUSA) [9.23, edited]

**The new life does not release us from conflict with unbelief, pride, lust, fear. We still have to struggle with disheartening difficulties and problems. Nevertheless, as we mature in love and faithfulness in our life with Christ, we live in freedom and good cheer, bearing witness on good days and evil days, confident that the new life is pleasing to God and helpful to others.**

 Hymn: *Bring Forth the Kingdom*  p. 6, gold supplement

 Prayers of the People and the Lord’s Prayer

 Leader: Lord, in your mercy,

 **People**: **hear our prayers.**

**The Lord’s Prayer:** (unison)

**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.**

Offering of Ourselves and Our Gifts

[The offering plate is at the back of the sanctuary. Please leave your gift or pledge
in the plate on your way into or out of worship.]

 Offertory Anthem: *When You Call*  Ruth Elaine Schram

 \**Doxology* Hymnal #606

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;**

**Praise Him all creatures here below;**

**Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;**

**Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

Public domain

 Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication

 Hymn 247: *Now the Green Blade Rises* (all 4 verses)

 Charge and Benediction

 Leader: Now go and serve the Lord,

 **All: For we are blessed to be a blessing!
 Alleluia, amen!**

 Improvisational Postlude

**Participants and Technical Crew**

Rev. Wendy Boden
Liturgist: Andrea Schmidt
Greeter/Fellowship: Nick Kaskovich
Music: Tom Anderson, Southminster Choir
Worship Assistant: David Kozich

Tech support: Chris Kozich, Blair Nelson

The flowers today are from Craig and Sarah Allen to celebrate Craig’s birthday.

If you are present for worship, following the service you are invited by the deacons to gather for **in-person fellowship** in the narthex. Coffee and canned beverages will be served; masks and social distancing are at your discretion.

If you are online, we’re glad to have you! Using the comments section on Facebook, you can say hello, ask for words of peace, or request prayers.
 **Sunday Morning Adult Ed. Bible Study, 11:15 a.m.:** Join us by using this link: <https://meet.google.com/fna-eojg-uye>. If you’re already at church and wish to join us, find Blair at his computer in the parlor/library.

You are invited to join us on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/SouthminsterGlenEllyn/>), where we have a live sharing of “**Heart to Heart**” with Pastor Wendy Boden at 4:20 p.m. most weeks Tuesday through Friday.

Even though we have returned to in-person worship, we will also continue to be live on **Sunday morning for worship** at 9:30 a.m. (slideshow beginning at 9:15) on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPgWICngOvkmR1OXgCG_wiA/live>

or on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/SouthminsterGlenEllyn/>

If you are watching from home on Facebook, please check in and say hello so we can see that you have joined us. This is one way to make worship less “remote” and strengthen community at Southminster.

*The live video will appear about 15 minutes before the scheduled start time.*

*If for any reason the feed falters, rest assured that a recording will be posted to Facebook and You Tube as soon as possible.*

You can also find links to recordings of the weekday sessions, special services, and Sunday worship posted on our web site: <https://www.southminsterpc.org/> or by going to our YouTube channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPgWICngOvkmR1OXgCG_wiA/videos>

**Photo Stories/PowerPoints help us feel connected!**Photo Stories/PowerPoints help us prepare for worship, connect with one another, and make sure that our at-home people get both sound and sight. We have a very specific request coming up:
 **January 28: “Meet Our Church Officers”** - Elders and deacons, we want photos of
 you—with your families and pets, enjoying a hobby, on vacation… Help church
 members get to know you a bit! Send your photos by this Thursday, January 25.

**Send photos to our dedicated email address, used just for photos:****PhotoStory@Southminsterpc.org****.** (If you only have hard copies of your photos, please leave them in the photo box on Pastor Wendy’s desk, labeled with your name and the date they are to be used.

Watch this space and the weekly eNotes for future photo requests.

**Notes from Blair Nelson:**
**Adult Education**: We continue our study of Malachi today at 11:15 a.m. in the Parlor/Library or online via this link: [<https://meet.google.com/fna-eojg-uye>](https://meet.google.com/fna-eojg-uye).

**Youth**: Join us for **Pizza & Games** today from 4:00-6:00 p.m. Bring your smile, your enthusiasm, and $5 for the meal. We will have some fun, food, a deep thought, and discuss a new service opportunity.
Also, Feb. 25 will be our **Chili Cook-Off** after church, so have that on the calendar.
**From the Mission Ministry**:
***Luminaria Sunday:*** We will have Luminaria Sunday on February 25. On that Sunday, as in the past, we will honor and remember those touched by cancer. Luminaria bags will light the sanctuary during the worship service. Names of those remembered and honored will be read during the Prayers of the People.

Luminaria bags will be available for a $10 donation to the American Cancer Society for each person honored or remembered. Checks will be accepted from January 28 through February 11. Please provide your check, **made out to the American Cancer Society**, by February 11. Please print the name(s) of those you wish to honor (those living who have cancer or have had cancer) and those remembered (those who had cancer and are now deceased). For each name, please indicate if the person is to be honored or remembered. Example: “John Jones, remembered, $10. Jane Smith, honored, $10. Total: $20.” Then submit your check with the names to those providing the bags on Sunday mornings at church or mail your check to Southminster Presbyterian Church, 680 S. Park Blvd., Glen Ellyn, IL 60137. Luminaria bags will be prepared for each person so honored or remembered.

 **The “Souper Bowl” is coming!**
It’s cold outside! What’s better when it’s cold than warm soup? On the first two Sundays in February – the 4th and 11th – the kids of Southminster will be collecting soup to donate to People’s Resource Center (PRC). Canned or packaged soup, beef stew, or chili would be great. Please donate as you can to help our neighbors. There will be a collection container inside the front entrance.
 **From the Worship Ministry:**The **flower chart** for the first half of 2024 is posted in the Narthex. If unable to sign up at church, contact Sarah Allen (ridesrowdy@aol.com) with your requests. The cost of flower arrangements will stay at $35 for 2024. If you are donating your flowers, mark the chart with an X. Deacons deliver flowers that are donated.
The flower chart for July to December 2024 will be posted after Easter.

**Women’s Circle**

**Coming Up: The Purse Auction!**

An invitation from and for our women of all ages:

Come join us for a fun-filled Purse Auction on Sunday, February 4, 1:30-4:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. There will be many laughs, refreshments, and fellowship. This is truly a wonderful way to spend an afternoon. Please come join us and bring some friends - all ages are welcome.

We need your help! A purse collection box is in the coatroom. Please bring any purses and small items for inside the purses to church by next Sunday, January 28.

**Jubilee Bucks:**
Our first order of 2024 earned the church $171.56 in “free” money.
Your next chance to order will be February 4. (Start thinking about Valentine’s Day!)
 **Donations for PRC (People’s Resource Center)**:
Southminster has been faithfully providing donations of food items and personal care products for PRC for many years. If you would like suggestions for what to give, PRC has provided a list of the items that are most needed. Copies are printed on bright green paper and are in the stand on the nametag shelf (main hallway – across from the offices). You can view the list online at the PRC website: <https://www.peoplesrc.org/give-food-or-goods/>.
Many thanks to all who continue to support PRC’s mission to meet our communities’ needs, neighbor to neighbor.

**Care Notes:** “In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.” -Philippians 4:6
Even though we aren’t all together for worship, we are still collecting prayer requests! Please email or leave a message on our answering machine at 630-469-9149 if you won’t be present to fill out a prayer request slip.

**Friends,****You are all invited to offer prayer for people whether they are members or not. It would be a joy and very helpful to know how people are doing. If you have submitted a person to be prayed for, please send an update to the office once in a while. Thank you! Pastor Wendy**

**Joys and Concerns**  **The flowers today** are from Craig and Sarah Allen, celebrating Craig’s birthday. **We give thanks to God for joys:**
  - For Ivy Grace Van Beveren, who was baptized here last Sunday
  - For the new refugee couple from Guatemala who arrived last week to see their first snow!
  - John D, who has undergone months of treatments for oral cancer - prayers of thanksgiving for new test results showing that he is now in full remission, and also prayers for continued healing.
  - Linda Wolf Jeziorski, as she continues to heal
  - Nikki Mendoza, who has graduated to regular scans
**We pray for the whole world and our nation:**
  - Prayers for the over 100 hostages – men, women, and children, including a 10-month-old baby – being held for 100 days.
  - Pray for our President and our legislative and judicial bodies
  - We pray for an end to gun violence in our nation. This past weekend (January 13-14), there were 4 mass shootings (involving 4 or more victims), leaving 8 people dead and 11 injured. Go to [data from the Gun Violence Archive](https://www.gunviolencearchive.org/reports/mass-shooting) to see current statistics for mass shootings in this country.
  - We pray for our nation as we continue to wrestle with race relations.
  - We continue to pray for peace in the world, especially Ukraine/Russia, Israel/Gaza, the Sudan, Congo, Syria and Iran/ISIS
**Blessed are those who mourn:**
  - Louanne Jourdan in the death of her niece, Tammy Gray, age 54, on Wednesday, January 17. Joy that she was able to live through her son’s wedding though unable to attend.
  - The Schmidt family on the sudden death of Parin’s Aunt Ruth Thome
  - We continue to pray for the family of Grace Van Beveren.
  - We pray for Joan and for the Koska sons and their families, mourning the loss of Ed.
  - The family and many friends of Dan Bohi (who died a year ago, January 10, 2023) and especially Deb, Jessica, and Megan and their families
**We lift up those who are affected by cancer, as well as their support systems:
*Please help us pray for your family and friends by updating your loved ones’ information with the church office. We support them and you in their journey.***
  - Meagan Severson, friend of the Boden-Nelsons, who is beginning cancer treatment for stage four colon cancer
 - Marta Sundquist, for her white count and platelet count to stay in the normal range in order to get her 6th round of chemo.
  - Tricia Smith’s sister, Betty Rupley
  - Lanny’s friend Dean L, who is going bi-weekly for radiation and chemo
  - We continue to pray for: Bobby B. (Wendy Boden), Frank B., Tom G., Frank L., Jan M., Rebecca M., Tim O., Helen S (Shierry), Gerry S., and others we name in our hearts.
  - Beverly W., Gretchen’s sister in law, who has chosen not to continue treatment  **We pray for all who are recovering or dealing with mental or physical health or other challenges:**  - Deb Bohi’s brother Tom and sister-in-law Pat who have Covid complications, and prayers for all who have Covid
  - Prayers for Joan Koska, recovering from cataract surgery, and for all those recovering from surgery or have upcoming procedures.
  - For Paul Anderson and all those who are experiencing chronic pain.
  - For Faith and others who are depressed
  - Ann Anderson asks prayers for Dan, who is on dialysis. Pray that his heart and liver function well, that fluid doesn’t build up, and that he doesn’t need a heart transplant.
  - Heidi Shierry’s cousin, Bailey
  - Those looking for meaningful employment
  - Jim Smith, recovering at Brookdale
  - We pray for those who are in hospice care: Rod B (Katie Boston’s father) who has newly entered hospice; Gail Johnston at Du Page Convalescent Center (If you send a card to Gail, please mail it to Andrea Schmidt, whose address is in the directory.); former President Jimmy Carter.
**We pray for the Jeremiah 29 discernment task force and all of us as we seek God’s will for Southminster in the 21st century.** May we all be attentive to the Holy Spirit’s leading.

**Caring for you!**Our **Congregational Care Committee** is ready to assist in time of need. If you need assistance from the Congregational Care Ministry or Helping Hands) in January, call Elise Henkels (630-740-0473). You may call Pastor Wendy Boden on her cell or home phone (if she has shared the numbers with you) or leave a message for her at the church office: 630-469-9149. Email Wendy at wendy@southminsterpc.org. (Please note that she can only read email when she is in the office.) You may also call your deacon if you need help from the church.

**Regular Office Schedule: The church office is closed on Mondays and Wednesdays.**Barb’s regular schedule is to be in the office Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from approximately 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. while her son attends his day program on those days. Mondays and Wednesdays she works from home.

Grace and peace to you! Remember that we love God, neighbor, and one another. Our address is 680 South Park Blvd., Glen Ellyn, IL 60137 if you would like to set up an online account with your bank or mail in your pledge. Online giving through Vanco is also now an option –for details contact Ron Birchall.

**Dates to remember this week:**    **Sunday, January 21**
 **Worship** at 9:30 a.m. in person and also live on Facebook
 **In-person Fellowship** in the Narthex following the service
 **Staff Meeting** at 10:45 a.m. in the Pastor’s Office
 **Adult Ed.** at 11:15 a.m. either online via Google Meet or by joining Blair
 in person in the McHenry Parlor/Library
 **Confirmation** meets at 11:15 a.m. in the Pastor’s office **Youth: Pizza & Games** from 4:00-6:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall
**Monday, January 22 – Pastor’s Sabbath**
**Tuesday-Friday – Pastor Wendy’s Heart to Heart** on Facebook live at 4:20 p.m.
**Tuesday, January 23
 Jeremiah Task Force** meets at 7:30 p.m. in McHenry Parlor/Library
 A.A. meets at 7:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall
**Wednesday, January 24
 eNotes** will go out
 **Pastor’s Prelude Bible Study** at 4:00 p.m. at the home of Lois Stevenson  **Friday, January 26**
 A.A. meets at 6:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall
**Next** **Sunday,** **January 28**
 **Worship** at 9:30 a.m. in person and also live on Facebook
 **In-person Fellowship** in the Narthex following the service
 **Luminaria for Luminaria Sunday** will be available during Fellowship time
 **Staff Meeting** at 10:45 a.m. in the Pastor’s Office
 **Adult Ed.** at 11:15 a.m. either online via Google Meet or by joining Blair
 in person in the McHenry Parlor/Library
 **Confirmation** meets at 11:15 a.m. in the Pastor’s office

**Bearing Fruit – January 21, 2024**

**An Invitation to Lent**
After the resurrection Jesus left instructions to the disciples that they were to wait for the Father’s promise. Over 120 followers of Jesus prayed together in an upper room in Jerusalem anticipating that gift and seeking God’s direction. They prayed, they listened, and they talked to one another. God gave them the promised gift and direction for the next steps. The result is the gift of the Holy Spirit, which we celebrate on Pentecost.

God’s people are not meant to be lone rangers. Christians, particularly Presbyterian Christians, are known for making decisions together. We are a community of faith, and together we discern what and where God is calling us to. We pray, we listen, and we talk to one another.

We are entering a season of discernment at Southminster. What is God calling us to do and be in the 21st century? Post Easter was a time of prayerful waiting. Lent is also a natural time for us to prayerfully wait and look for God’s direction.

Lent is soon upon us, beginning on February 14 with Ash Wednesday. Lent is a season of waiting and watching. This Lent you are invited by the session, the Jeremiah 27 Task Force, and Pastor Wendy Boden to wait and watch together by reading a book.

We are inviting everyone to please read the book, *A Future for Your Congregation Beyond More Money, Programs, and Innovation*. That is the subtitle! The title, *When Church Stops Working*, is frightening. Think about your car breaking down in the cold. Think about how we try to warm up our cars on these recent cold mornings.

The church, however, is not a car; it is God’s presence in the world. God designed the church to be Christ’s body in the world, Christ’s presence. It is a home, even a sanctuary, a place of gathering to live faithfully honoring God and God’s call on our lives.

God has called us to be church together, right here, right now in the early 21stcentury. As we study together this Lent, we will be watching and waiting with our Lord. The plan after Lent is to come together, share a meal, and share what we have learned from our reading, praying, watching, and waiting together. We haven’t picked the date for the meal, but it will be after Easter, most likely in April or May. How about an Easter Feaster?

You may read the book on your own, but the church would be better served if you found a group of people to discuss the book with before the meal. The book is on Kindle if you like, but Pastor Wendy will be ordering 23 copies and paying from her own expense account for any of you who find buying your own copy of the book a burden. Please let our pastor know if you would like her to order a book for you. We get a better price if we order in bulk.

The authors, Dr. Andrew Root and Dr. Blair D. Bertrand, are both active professors with teaching careers. Do not be intimated by that! Although these two have good academic credentials, they know how to talk to all of us. The book is an accessible read. Our Pastor and our Minister of Youth and Adult Discipleship met Dr. Root this summer and were very impressed with both his scholarship and wisdom, common sense, and good humor.

Our pastor is willing to help find other people to share this Lenten journey with you. If you have any questions, connect with Pastor Wendy or members of the Task Force: Ron Birchall, Melissa Hammer, Nalani Johnson, Jessica Parks, and Andrea Schmidt. They are in the process of reading the book. Let us listen together for God’s leading by reading, praying, watching, and waiting together this Lent. Praying, reading, discussing together is one of the ways we bear God’s love in our congregation and in the world.