

WESTOVER HILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)



Fourth Sunday After Epiphany

February 2, 2025

10:30am

OUR MISSION

Westover Hills Presbyterian Church exists to worship & learn, welcome & celebrate, advocate & serve with people open to a faith shaped by practice to be a congregation recognized as a safe place and a resource for action, acceptance, and joy.

Adopted May 2024



WESTOVER HILLS
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Mary Holmes College

Black History Month 2025

Celebrating the Legacy of Black Presbyterians

Found it in 1892 as Mary Holmes seminary in Jackson, Mississippi, this institution of higher learning in the Presbyterian Church tradition served for more than a century. Reverend Mead Holmes, a Presbyterian missionary, and his daughter, Mary Emilie Holmes founded the school as a “literary and industrial school” for young black women in honor of Rev. Holmes’ late wife, Mary D. Holmes.

After fire destroyed the campus, the college moved to donated land in Moss Point, Mississippi. This would be the permanent home of the college until its closure in 2005. From the beginning, the mission of Mary Holmes College was to serve under-represented and under-served populations in higher education. By the 1950s, the school was coed and was focused on educating school teachers.

Like many colleges focused on the needs of underrepresented communities, Mary Holmes faced economic challenges in the 1970s through the 1990s due to the increasing costs associated with higher education. The administration and faculty of Mary Holmes worked diligently for decades to maintain their commitment to the underserved while also facing the economic realities of running a modern college.

In March 2005, the 180+ acre campus as well as the records in archives of the college were returned to the Presbyterian Church. Although Mary Holmes College no longer educates students, for more than a century the college helped shape generations of Black teachers despite the many obstacles faced in the Jim Crow South.

This Black History Month we celebrate the legacy of Mary Holmes College, the contributions of its faculty staff and students, and the many lives touched by their graduates.

WE GATHER AT GOD'S INVITATION

**Those who are able are invited to stand. Bold text indicates unison readings.*

WELCOME & INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP

Rev. Dr. Robert Lowry

PRELUDE

David Austin, Director of Music

CALL TO WORSHIP

Shirley Garlington, Liturgist

Return to the Lord your God,

for God is gracious.

Confess to the Lord your God,

for God is merciful.

Repent to the Lord your God,

for God is slow to anger.

Praise the Lord your God,

for God abounds in steadfast love.

Worship the Lord your God.

Together, let us worship God!

OPENING PRAYER

Christ Jesus, we come into your presence

from many different places.

We come with songs of joy and shouts of gratitude.

We come carrying heavy burdens and sighs of suffering.

As you welcome us into your house, lift our burdens and receive our praise.

Salt us with your grace and flavor us with your mercy.

Bind us together, that we may be at peace with one another

and be strengthened to go forth in service to the world.

In your holy name, we pray. Amen.

+GATHERING HYMN

"Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!"

Purple #1

CALL TO CONFESSION

Let us turn to God not in fear but in hope as we confess our sins.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Lord Jesus Christ, there are times when we all feel like victims—
pawns in the powerplays which are so much a part of life these days.
As usual, however, you look into our hearts
and question what part we play in these power games.
We know that in your eyes it is not social status,
or wealth or reputation that count,
and we confess how easily our lives can become enmeshed
in such worldly values.

You risked personal comfort and security
when you reached out to those on the edge of your society,
lepers and sinners—people whom others considered unclean.
**Forgive us when we fail to meet your challenge
to identify with those whom society would call worthless.**

You showed us that the journey of discipleship
is a journey into servanthood and powerlessness.
**Forgive us for being tempted to pursue power
and to favour competition over compassion.**

You, Lord, saw the good in everyone
and showed us exactly what it means to be the servant of all,
**while too often we see others as rivals
in the race for success, influence and popularity.**

“Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.”
*Imprint these words on our hearts
and put your living Spirit within us, we pray,
so that we serve others and you
with wisdom, understanding, love and compassion. Amen.*

Silence is kept

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!
Thanks be to God!

+SUNG RESPONSE

“Alleluia!”

Purple #587

+THE PEACE OF CHRIST

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

WE PROCLAIM GOD’S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

“Thy Word”

Purple #458

SCRIPTURE READING

James 4:17

SERMON

“Loaded Words: Sin”

Rev. Dr. Robert Lowry

WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD

+HYMN OF RESPONSE

“God Is Here Today”

Purple #411

+AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Jesus Christ, as he is attested for us in Holy Scripture, is the one Word of God which we have to hear and which we have to trust and obey in life and in death.

We reject the false doctrine, as though the church could and would have to acknowledge as a source of its proclamation, apart from and besides this one Word of God, still other events and powers, figures and truths, as God's revelation.

As Jesus Christ is God's assurance of the forgiveness of all our sins, so in the same way and with the same seriousness is he also God's mighty claim upon our whole life. Through him befalls us a joyful deliverance from the godless fetters of this world for a free, grateful service to God's creatures.

OFFERING

WE GATHER AT GOD'S TABLE

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

THE 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 today our daily bread.

And forgive our debts as we forgive our debtors.

Lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

THE COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

THE PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

WE DEPART IN GOD'S NAME

+CLOSING HYMN *"Son of God, Whose Heart Is Peace"*

Purple #425

+CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

+POSTLUDE



THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

JOIN US ON THE JOURNEY!

FEB. 2 – FEB. 8, 2025

Welcome!

We are so glad to be worshipping with you today. If this is your first visit, welcome! If you have been with us before, welcome back! Whether you are a life-long Presbyterian, a brand-new Christian, or someone who is just trying to make sense of this world we share, we hope you will feel at home at Westover Hills Presbyterian.

Let us know you are worshipping with us!

In the pew you will find an information card. Please leave us information on how we might be in touch with you to share more about life at Westover Hills. We would love to share a little about our story and hear more about yours. If you do not see a card in the pew near you, please ask one of the ushers you saw when you came in and we will be sure to get one for you. If you prefer, please scan the QR code below to be directed to the contact page of our website.



Digital Visitor Card

Westover Hills Preschool Registration 2025-26

Registration for Westover Hills Preschool is now open for current students and any interested church members who have children or grandchildren ages 18 months to four years (in September). Call Director Shawn Mittedorf at (501) 666-0880 or email westoverhillspreschool@gmail.com for more information. Registration opens to the public in February.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) Responds to CA Wildfires

To help the Presbytery of the Pacific aid its churches and communities as they recover from the recent wildfires, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) has deployed two volunteer teams from the National Response Team. One will support the Presbytery in assessment and response to the damage. The second team will provide disaster emotional and spiritual care at Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs). When survivors come into DRC's, the PDA volunteers will be present to listen to their stories and to help them connect with the resources they need.

Manna Studies Micah

Midweek Manna is back with a study of the prophet Micah. Over the next six weeks we will do a close read of the prophet's writing and explore how it speaks to us today.

Feb 5, & 12 in-person in the Chapel

Prayer and Meditation

There are two important traditions at Westover Hills that join our voices in prayer every week. The first is *Prayer on the 9's*. Every day you are able, join us in taking a minute to pause at 9am and 9pm to offer a short prayer for the church, the world, or someone you know who needs comfort. Every Sunday in the bulletin and every Wednesday in the Careline e-newsletter, we share the list of pastoral care concerns known to the church. Members and friends are invited to pray for those people and world issues named on the list. Prayers of comfort, for healing, and for peace are always appropriate ways to remember our friends and neighbors. This week we remember:

From Liz Gath: "Thanks to your prayers, visits, cards, well wishes and good medical care, I have recovered from colon cancer surgery. Today, I have embarked on a 6 month journey of chemotherapy. Please pray for acceptance of whatever is in store."

Charlie Frith, recovering from surgery

Jennifer Garlington, Shirley Garlington's niece, has started new cancer treatments to combat renewed cancer growth;

Survivors, responders, and communities impacted by wildfires, especially in the Los Angeles area

John Bowyer, friend of Ann & Max, bone biopsy procedure;

Judi King, ongoing health concerns;

Max Snowden, undergoing treatment for cancer;

Sam Highsmith, in hospice care at Presbyterian Village;

Beth Highsmith, in memory care in Alabama near her daughter;

Isatu Lebbie continuing to recover from a stroke;

Rene Thompson, friend of Joyce Smith, dealing with cancer treatments;

Stacy Harter dealing with cancer;

Monroe Flucas, Jr., Julie Gaffney, Martin Gaffney, Richard Gaffney, Eunice Holdcroft as they deal with health issues (friends of Judi King);

Our members and friends at Presbyterian Village;

The WHPC Staff: Robert, Tammy, David, Ulysses, and Shawn

Bold indicates new additions or updates.

To include a person or group on the Prayer List, please contact the church office at office.westoverhills@gmail.com and Robert at robertwilliamlowry@gmail.com

Deacon's Ministry

Deacons for February are Shirley Garlington and Mary Henry

Westover Hills Presbyterian Church

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