Pastor Profile

As God guides in finding whom He is preparing to be our pastor, we seek a man who is developing and demonstrates the following qualities in his life and work. This man:

- **Exemplifies Godly character.** He maintains a thriving daily devotional life, practicing the characteristics set forth in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. He will prioritize prayer, absorb and live God's Word, and will enjoy a reputation above reproach. If married, he will treasure his roles as husband and father, and will shepherd his family well. (We at Westminster prioritize character over giftedness).

- **Manifests servanthood and a warm pastoral heart.** He will desire to build relationships, disciple believers, and counsel those in need. Humbly, he will walk alongside God's people rather than merely directing them. He will be sufficiently self-aware to know his own strengths and weaknesses, and therefore willing to seek counsel from his fellow elders and church staff.

- **Preaches the whole counsel of God with skill and faithfulness.** Being firmly committed to God's inerrant Word, he will skillfully manifest Reformed doctrinal fidelity in both his sermons and his teaching. Effectively communicating God's truth to the whole flock, he will be able to "bridge the gap" between all age groups and stages of spiritual maturity ("He puts the hay where the sheep can reach it.").

- **Leads by example.** Working alongside his elders, he will visit with and shepherd those under his care. With the deacons he will promote good stewardship of resources, and will model a generous servant's heart. He will do his best to come to a shared vision with his fellow church officers, and will encourage small group fellowship, Sunday School, and mid-week ministry, will be a vital part of Vacation Bible School, and will take part in developing a more vital youth program. The hard work of engaging with presbytery and denominational matters will also be important to him.

- **Cares for Vicksburg and the watching world around us.** He will have a passion for the lost, and will do his best to cultivate the same concern in others. Living here in Vicksburg, he will know the people of this community, see their needs, their hopes (and their flaws and weaknesses), while being patient with all. Looking out over the horizon, he sees possibilities that others may not have seen, including approaches to shepherding, visitation and care.

Church Profile

Where We Are

In 1951, Westminster Presbyterian Church was founded as a church plant of the Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS) in the historic city of Vicksburg, Mississippi. In 1973, Westminster became part of the newly formed Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), where it continues today and is a member of the Mississippi Valley Presbytery. As the only PCA church within a 20-minute drive, Westminster serves a warm and socioeconomically and racially diverse community of approximately 42,000 residents.

Vicksburg is the only city in Warren County and sits on the Mississippi River along I-20 about 45 miles West of Jackson and almost exactly halfway between Dallas, TX and Atlanta, GA. Vicksburg is also just a short drive to New Orleans or the Gulf Coast. Jackson-Medgar Wiley Evers International Airport is less than an hour away to make it easy for friends and family to visit.

Families here have their pick of many educational options for their children, from public and private K-12 schools to an active homeschooling association. Vicksburg also offers robust recreational and enrichment programs for children, including many sports and music options. There are many two- and four-year colleges nearby in surrounding communities and cities - including Reformed Theological Seminary nearby in Jackson.

Vicksburg is home to three major U.S. Army Corps of Engineers facilities, including the Corps' largest research laboratory in the country, giving strong job opportunities to a skilled workforce. Vicksburg is rooted in history and has a thriving tourism industry that centers around the Vicksburg National Military Park. Additionally, residents enjoy many recreational amenities: tennis and pickleball courts, golf courses, soccer and baseball fields, and multiple gyms and pools. There are many opportunities to get involved with the community through various civic and volunteer organizations.

A Season of Growth

By God's grace, our church has grown in recent years, both in number and in spiritual vitality. We have become increasingly intergenerational, with new members and young families joining longtime members. We see the Spirit at work in the lives of our church family, as many are now eager to participate in the life and ministry of the church. As members of the body of Christ, they are using their unique gifts and abilities to serve the Lord and one another. "So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth." - 1 Corinthians 3:7

Worship

At 10:55 a.m. on the Lord's Day, we gather in the sanctuary to worship the Triune God. The pastor and ruling elders take part in leading the service. We lift our praise and thanksgiving to God through prayer, singing, the reading of Scripture, and the preaching of the Word. *("...come, let us worship and bow down..." - Psalm 95:6)*

The Word of God guides our liturgy. Responsive readings, prayer, affirmations of faith, corporate confession of sin, and other elements of the service encourage active participation by the congregation. *("Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth." - John 17:17)*

Our music is a blend of traditional and newer hymns, songs, and psalms. Our music director accompanies the congregation on piano, with other members also using their musical gifts in our worship. *("...psalms and hymns and spiritual songs..." - Colossians 3:16)*

The preaching of the Word is central to our worship. We strive to offer faithful, Reformed, expository preaching that recognizes Christ and His saving work throughout all of Scripture - sermons that are grounded in Scripture, clearly delivered, and relatable to people of all ages and walks of life. *("...they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading." - Nehemiah 8:8)*

The sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are an important part of our worship. We observe the Lord's Supper monthly and celebrate Baptism as the occasion arises. *("...do this in remembrance of me." - 1 Corinthians 11:24)*

What We Believe

As a Reformed congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America, we stand on the Westminster Standards and particularly affirm the following:

Scripture: The Bible is the inspired, inerrant, and infallible Word of God, our rule for faith and life. The gospel of Jesus Christ is revealed throughout Scripture. *(2 Timothy 3:16-17; Luke 24:27)*

The Triune God: There is one true and living God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. *(Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19)*

Jesus Christ: The second person of the Trinity and the Father's only begotten Son is fully God and fully man. He came to save sinners, lived a perfect life, accomplished atonement on the cross, rose bodily from the dead, ascended to the Father's right hand, and will return to judge the living and the dead. *(John 1:1, 14; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4)*

Salvation: By grace alone, through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone, all to the glory of God alone. The Holy Spirit keeps God's elect in Christ to the end. *(Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 8:29-30)*

Fellowship

As believers united to Christ, fellowship is an important part of who we are at Westminster. We are a church family, with people of different ages who enjoy being together and serving alongside one another. We believe the Holy Spirit has used our fellowship to draw us closer. We see that in our worship and ministries, and in our weekly meals and other times together. *("Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!" - Psalm 133:1)*

Ministries

Sunday School. Sunday School meets each Sunday at 9:45 a.m., before morning worship, with classes for children, youth, and adults. Classes study the Bible and use other resources from the Reformed tradition.

Wednesday at Westminster. Each week, we gather for dinner and fellowship. After the meal, men and women meet for discussion, recently using devotions from Tabletalk magazine. Children and youth have their own programs during this time.

Vacation Bible School. Each summer, our week of Vacation Bible School welcomes children through sixth grade, including children from families of non-members and visitors from the community. The children learn songs, memorize Scripture, and enjoy crafts. On the final day, children and their families join us for a potluck supper that fills the fellowship hall.

Women of the Church. Women of the Church take an active role in congregational life through regular Bible studies and care for families. They organize meals for those dealing with illness and offer meals and prayer support to grieving families.

Ministries (continued)

Events

Soups, Salads, Sandwiches and Sweets. Once a quarter, Westminster has a fellowship meal after morning service. This gives members and guests an opportunity to share a meal, build friendships, and enjoy meaningful time together.

Church Picnics. Our church picnics are held twice a year, in the spring and fall, at a member's home in the country. It's a cookout where we enjoy fellowship, the pleasant weather, sing songs of praise, and open God's word for a short devotion.

Easter Egg Hunt. Each Easter Saturday, a church family hosts an Easter Egg hunt at their yard, attracting extended families with young children for a fun time together.

Samaritan's Purse. Samaritan's Purse is a Christian organization that meets practical needs and shares the gospel with people around the world. We actively support this ministry, particularly through its Operation Christmas Child program. Every year, we pack shoeboxes filled with gifts to bring joy to children around the world and share Christ's love with them at Christmas.

Community Outreach

Ping-Pong. This longstanding weekly gathering brings church members and visitors together for fellowship.

The Foundry. Founded by one of our elders, The Foundry is a separate ministry that Westminster strongly supports. Men from our church help teach young men practical skills and build relationships with them.

Missions Support

Through our missions budget, Westminster provides ongoing monthly support to a selected group of missionaries. We also provide generous annual support to individual interns serving with Reformed University Fellowship, along with support for other Christian ministries and schools.

Mercy and Benevolence

Our deacons care for practical needs within the congregation and in the wider community, including financial assistance where needed.

Facilities

Our church building includes several classrooms, church offices, an upstairs fellowship hall, and a sanctuary updated in 2019. We have also renovated the downstairs nursery. Further improvements to the classrooms and fellowship areas are being planned, along with ways to make the upstairs fellowship hall more accessible.

Stewardship

By God's grace, years of generosity from our members and careful stewardship have left Westminster debt-free. Our congregation's faithful giving, together with careful budgeting, stays ahead of our regular expenses, and our reserves and investments provide a sound foundation for planned improvements and future ministry.

Looking Ahead

We are thankful to the Lord for the good things happening at Westminster. We seek God's guidance as we work to strengthen our children's and youth ministries and explore more organized approaches to shepherding, visitation and care. Work on our facilities is already underway, and we have more planned. We look forward to working alongside our next pastor, serving the Lord at Westminster.