**Southminster Presbyterian Church**

**7th Sunday after Epiphany**

**Luminaria Sunday**

**February 23, 2025**

**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/Photo Story: “Luminaria Sunday”

 Welcome and Announcements

 Lighting the Candles (John 1:5)

**“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”**

  Prelude

[Please remain seated as we begin worship.]

 Hymn: *Grace Alone*  pg. 16, gold supplement

 Call to Worship  (Psalm 27)

 Leader: The Lord is our light and our salvation;

 **People: Whom then shall we fear?**

 Leader: The Lord is the strength of our lives! Wait for the Lord!

 **All:** **Be strong, take heart, and wait for the Lord.**

 Hymn: *Shine on Us*  pg. 37, gold supplement

 Prayer of Confession: (unison)

**Loving God, we adore you for the way you modelled real love for us in word and in action. You have shown us just how we should love one another and become the servant of others. There are times when we simply don’t want to. We want things our way! And we find it hard to love others. Forgive us and help us. Turn us again to your example. Help us to soak up your teaching, and help us to imitate you in our love and service to one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, who is our Lord and savior. Amen.**

 (Time of silence for personal prayer and confession)

 Declaration of God’s Grace/The Good News of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 4:6)

 Leader: God calls light out of darkness.

 **People: God now shines in our hearts to reveal
 the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.**

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

 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 Nelson
 Children worshiping in the sanctuary, please come forward.

As the children leave:

 *God Welcomes All*  Hymnal 399

**God welcomes all, strangers and friends;**

**God’s love is strong and it never ends.**

Text: John L. Bell, 2008

Music: South African song, transc, John L. Bell, 2008

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 Prayer for Illumination

 Scripture Lessons:  Luke 7:36-39  Pew Bible, p. 66 (N.T.)

 Luke 7:40-50 Pew Bible, p. 66 (N.T.)

 Sermon: “Greater Love” Pastor Wendy Boden

 Saying What We Believe/Affirmation of Faith (unison) (Romans 8:26-27)

**Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words. And God, who searches hearts, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.**

 Hymn 418: *Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling*  (all verses)

Prayers of the People and the Lord’s Prayer

 Leader: Lord, in your mercy,

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

**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 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: *A Living Prayer*  Ron Block

 \**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: *I’ll Fly Away*  (all verses) pg. 24, gold supplement

 Charge and Benediction

 Leader: Now go and serve the Lord,
 **People: For we are blessed to be a blessing! Alleluia!**

 Postlude: *Precious Lord, Take My Hand*

**Participants and Technical Crew**

Rev. Wendy Boden

Liturgist: Jessica Bohi-Parks
Greeter/Fellowship: Beth Bonde
Elder at the Door: Rita Zapel
Musicians: Tom Anderson, Paul Jeziorski
Tech support: Chris Kozich, Alec Parks

The flowers today are given to honor and remember all those affected by cancer and those who love and tirelessly support them.

**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.

*New requests and updates are italicized in our prayer list.*

**Joys and Concerns** *The flowers today* *are given to honor and remember all those affected by cancer and those who love and tirelessly support them.*  **We give thanks to God for joys:** *- Steve, not a member of our congregation, is grateful for our payers and the gift of a prayer shawl.
 - We give thanks that Wendy’s mother is feeling better after having Covid and Wendy’s bonus Dad, Frank, has returned home after surgery.
 - Thanksgiving for a good session meeting Tuesday evening*  - That Mark, brother of Donna Marton, has found a place to live.
**We pray for the whole world and our nation:**
 *- May all Americans follow the law of love.*  - We lift up the 10,000 and more federal government employees who have been let go. May you strengthen their hearts and minds about the best course of action. Shine in their hearts and minds.
  - We hold before you the people of World Relief, clients, employees, and volunteers, some of whom are members of Southminster. Thousands of people with purchased plane tickets are abandoned because they are now not allowed into the country, and others present here among us have lost the 90-day promise of support taken away from them. May mercy and grace be upon these people.
  - Lord, may you grant President Trump grace, wisdom, and compassion and all those associated with him as all our government leaders seek to fulfill their oaths of office.
  - We pray for the healing of our country and ask that all people model love, peace, and justice.
  - We also pray for areas in our nation and world struck by extreme weather and natural disasters.
  - We pray for an end to gun violence in our nation. *On one day (last Sunday, Feb. 16) there were 84 shooting incidents in 30 states plus Washington, D.C., leaving 41 people dead and 61 people injured.* To see current statistics for shootings in this country, go to <https://www.gunviolencearchive.org>. We lift up the families of all gun violence victims.
 - We continue to pray for peace in the world
 - We lift up the nation of Ukraine, that was invaded by Russia over three years ago.
**Blessed are those who mourn**:
  - Deb Bohi asks prayers for the family of her friend whose mother, Mrs. Clewett, died recently.
  - Rick and Darlene Crilly and family on the death of Rick’s mother, Dolores Crilly
 - Prayers of comfort and hope for Paul Jeziorski, extended family, and friends in the death of Linda Wolf Jeziorski on December 24. Her service was held January 11 at Southminster.
  - Jack Thorne and family after the death of his Aunt Marsh on December 31
  - Andrea Schmidt and all her family on the death of her mother, Gail Johnston, on November 1
  - Angela Smith and her family on the passing of her father, Franklin Keith Beeler, on October 30
  - Prayers for the family and friends of Caroline Linde, and for Ralph, her husband.
  - For those we name in our hearts and hold dear
**We lift up those who are affected by cancer, as well as their support systems**:
  - Floyd Rogers, recently diagnosed with cancer. He is beginning immunotherapy – will need injections every three weeks for years.
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.
**We pray for all who are recovering or dealing with mental or physical health or other challenges**:*- Jonathan Buckley being taken to Rush University Medical Center
  - Carole Peterson, hospitalized with serious health issues
  - Deb Bohi’s friend, Liz Werth, recovering from brain surgery*  - Greg, 35-year-old nephew of Barb Doppelt’s dear friend, Linda, who suffered a massive stroke and 3 cardiac arrests.
  - Susie and Sean Salins’ neighbors, Wally and Dee, are in declining health; Dee is in hospice care. They are like grandparents to Noah.  - Prayers for all recently arrived refugees, who are no longer receiving resettlement support from the U.S. government
  - Ann Anderson’s niece, Skylar, and other children who are bullied
  - Joan Koska is at Tabor Hills Healthcare Facility. Cards are welcome but no visitors.
Here is the address:
Joan Koska
c/o Tabor Hills Healthcare Facility
1347 Crystal Ave.
Room 234
Naperville, IL 60563
  - Jim Smith, at Brookdale, and all who are in care centers
  - Rita Zapel asks prayers for Willy Christensen, a close family friend, who is now in hospice care.
  - We continue to pray for: Barb (Deb’s cousin), Brandon, Joe M., Felice T., Isabella, Kathy, Linda T., Mya, Oaklen, Phyllis L.
**Prayers for our worshiping community and the Jeremiah Task Force** as we discern together God’s call on SPC for the 21st century.

**This week at Southminster:**  **Sunday, February 23 – Luminaria Sunday**
 **Worship** at 9:30 a.m. in person and also live on Facebook
 **Fellowship** in the Narthex following the service
 **Staff Meeting**, 11:00 a.m., Pastor’s Office
 **Adult Ed.** at 11:15 a.m. in McHenry Parlor/Library
 **Youth: Cookie Baking**, 4:00-6:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall (No meal this week.)
**Monday, February 24 – Pastor’s Sabbath
Tuesday-Friday –** **Pastor Wendy’s Heart to Heart on Facebook
 live at 5:04 p.m. (Note the new time!)
Tuesday, February 25
 Staff calendar meeting** at 12:30 p.m.
 A.A. at 7:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall
**Wednesday, February 26
 eNotes go out but it is also the deadline for the March Dialog**
 **Finance budget meeting** at 7:30 p.m. in McHenry Palro/Library **Thursday, February 27
 Choir rehearsal** at 7:00 p.m.
 **Young Adults Video Club** meets at 8:30 p.m. **Friday, February 28** A.A.at 6:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall
**Next** **Sunday,** **March 2
Order Jubilee Bucks gift cards** by contacting bobbifrey@aol.com before 9:00 p.m.
 **Worship, communion** at 9:30 a.m. in person and also live on Facebook
 **Fellowship** in the Narthex following the service
 **Chili-Soup Cook-Off** downstairs at 11:00 a.m.

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.
If you are present for worship, please wear a name tag; they are on the Mission shelf in the Narthex and on the shelf across from the church offices. Following the service, you are invited by the deacons to gather for a time offellowship in the narthex.

**Our “Comfort Zone”** – It is cold, flu, and Covid season, so we continue to have a “comfort zone” toward the back of the sanctuary. You may wear a mask, of course, if you so choose.

**Sunday Morning Adult Ed. Bible Study,** **11:15 a.m.:** If you’re at church and wish to join us, get your coffee at fellowship time and then find Blair 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 5:04 p.m. most weeks Tuesday through Friday. **Note the new time – 5:04 p.m.!**

We 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. Watch here for coming opportunities to share your photos.

**Calling all musicians, vocal or instrumental!** If you would like to offer your musical gifts in worship, please talk to Tom Anderson on a Sunday when he is here, by text at 651-246-5029, or by emailing the office (admin@southminsterpc.org) and we’ll forward your message.

**Notes from Blair Nelson:**
**Adult Education**: We are in the thick of Passion Week as told by Matthew. Jesus has been arrested, the disciples are scattering, Peter is going to deny even knowing him, and the trials and crucifixion are only hours away. But you know this story. Christian growth is driven, in part, by hearing our stories anew. This may be why we have four gospels, four versions of the one story. Join us at 11:15 a.m. in the Parlor/Library as we study, discuss, and hear Matthew’s story anew.

**Youth and Mission Trippers**: Today we’re having a **cookie baking night** from 4-6:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. We won’t be having a meal, though. Let Blair N know what ingredients you need to bake your favorite cookies. Got ingredients at home you want to bring? That works, too, just let Blair know so we have enough.
Chili/Soup Cook Off is after church next Sunday, March 2. So, mission trippers, we need everyone involved because this is our first fundraiser for this summer’s trip to Mission, S.D.

**Chili/Soup Cook-Off!**  Join us in Fellowship Hall after worship next Sunday, March 2. For a donation to the Youth Mission Team—supporting their week of workcamp this June—you will enjoy the best of our chefs’ chilis and soups. Sign-up sheets for the Cook Off are in the Narthex, one for contestants and one for those who eat and judge. The sign ups help us know how many to prepare for, but come even if you don’t remember to sign up. First place wins a $50 Penzey’s Spices gift certificate, donated by Rita Zapel—thanks, Rita! The youth will be waiting on tables, so be sure to ask them about Mission Trip. Note, there will be limited announcements on Luminaria Sunday, so you won’t get much of a reminder then, so put this in your calendar now! You don’t want to miss it.
 **“Paving the Way”**Parking lot committed funds total is $186,251 as of February 20. Committed funds include pledges.

Southminster members can feel the “sizzle” in the Paving the Way parking lot reconstruction Capital Campaign. Even though the amount raised is substantial, there have been some suggestions from congregation members for project improvements that would raise the cost, such as better lighting in the traffic circle area. Now is not the time to hold back as every dollar is important. Please donate as you are able.

If you need forms, more information, or have questions, please contact Rita Zapel at rboserup@sbcglobal.net.

**From the Worship Ministry
Ash Wednesday** marks the beginning of Lent. Join us on Ash Wednesday, March 5, at 7:30 p.m. in the sanctuary for a Taizé Prayer Service, which will include the imposition of ashes. Please take this opportunity to enter into the season of Lent with this beautiful and meaningful service.

**Sign up for Flowers:** The 2025 flower chart is posted for the first half of the year.
***Dates coming up that are still available: March 9, 23, and 30!***
If you are unable to sign up at church, contact Sarah Allen (sarah.cleland.allen@gmail.com) with your requests. The price remains the same as last year ($35 per arrangement). If you are donating your flowers, mark the chart with an X. Deacons deliver flowers that are donated. If you are not donating the flowers, please be sure to take them home after Sunday worship or designate someone to pick them up for you.

Worship Ministry is looking for more people to serve as **liturgists** or on the **Worship Arts Team**. If you’d like to volunteer or want to know more about what’s involved, contact Sarah Allen, Moderator of Worship. Her email address is above, or call her at 630-988-8231.

**The annual Easter Party!**Southminster hosts an Easter Party each year on Easter Saturday, open to both members of our congregation and the public. Your help will be appreciated! We are now:
 > Accepting **donations of candy** that is small enough to fit in an Easter egg
      *Please... candy needs to be purchased wrapped (not loose). No nuts, no peanut butter, no chewing gum, and no hard candy*.
 > Looking for **help stuffing Easter eggs** at home. Take home kits will be available in the Narthex on the benches.

**Women’s Monthly Breakfast**
Join us for the Women’s Monthly Breakfast on Wednesday, March 5, at 8:30 a.m. at Danby’s Station. This is a great time to reconnect with friends, make new ones, and enjoy fellowship and relaxation. All women are welcome! (March 5 is Ash Wednesday, but Women’s Breakfast will still meet.)

**Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA)** has been in communication with faith leaders in the affected communities in the fire regions in southern California. In addition to providing emotional and spiritual care, PDA has already released emergency grants to meet the urgent needs of the communities and to provide immediate assistance.

If you would like to contribute to PDA’s efforts, gifts can be made online by going to the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance website and scrolling to “Currently Responding – Southern California Wildfires,” by phone at 800-728-7228, ext. 5885, or by check made payable to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with “PDA-CF25-E” written on the memo line and mailed to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), P.O. Box 643700, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700. Or pick up one of the flyers on the prayer table at the entrance to the sanctuary and follow the donation information there.

**A note from Barb:** **Another thing to do while you’re hibernating during the winter…The puzzles are back**!
A friend from my church volunteers at SCARCE and often has boxes of donated jigsaw puzzles that need to be assembled so they’ll know whether all the pieces are there. I have several puzzles in the church office (under the front edge of the desk). Take one home, assemble it, and then put a note on the box: “All pieces here” or “Pieces missing.” Then bring it back so I can return it to SCARCE. (They have other things they can do with puzzles that are missing pieces – using pieces for art projects, for instance, or simply recycling the cardboard.)

**Jubilee Bucks: Order next Sunday, March 2!**
Thanks to all who ordered Jubilee Bucks in February. Your next chance to order will be next Sunday, March 2. Remember that gift cards make great gifts but are also useful for purchases you make for yourself – think groceries, gas, restaurant meals, and more. It's a win-win for you and for Southminster, since the church gets a rebate on each card purchased. The year-to-date total of “free money” earned for Southminster through the purchase of gift cards is $342.71.

**Donations for PRC (People’s Resource Center)**:
Our weekly donations are greatly appreciated! Every bit helps! Each client receives between 70-100 pounds of food per visit! PRC receives, rescues, sorts and distributes about 40,000 pounds of food per week. Thanks to all! If you’d like suggestions for the most needed items for the PRC food pantry, there are lists of suggested donations in one of the literature stands on the shelf in the main hallway that is across from the church offices.

**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 until March 11, call Deacon Kathy Sanders (630-476-2143). 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. You may 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.

**Bearing Fruit – February 23, 2025**

**Loving One Another and Neighbor**

How do you pray during the Prayers of the People? As the pastor, my prayers may elicit a thought, a reflection, or contemplation. Go with it! Go with it and offer that thought to God.

In some faith traditions, people pray out loud all at once during the Prayers of the People! We at Southminster don’t do that, but we are encouraged to follow the Spirit’s leading and pray as I pray. We pray together during the Prayers of the People. Remember, we will all conclude our prayers together at the end as we pray, “Lord in your mercy,” and “Hear our prayers.”

Prayer is an essential thread in the fabric of our community of faith. We all pray for one another, and our twice-weekly joys and concerns prayer list is in our eNotes and worship bulletins. We also include those prayer requests in our monthly *Dialog*.

Everyone is invited and encouraged to make prayer requests, whether members or not. On Sunday morning, you may fill out a blue prayer request slip, or during the week, email or call Barb or me so that your prayers may be included.

Knowing how people are doing would be a joy and very helpful. If you have submitted a person to be prayed for, please send an update to the office occasionally.

Today is an important Sunday in the life of Southminster. Years ago, the Mission Ministry wanted to offer an opportunity to support the fight against cancer through the American Cancer Society. The result is **Luminaria Sunday**, which is generally held the last Sunday in February - a worship service where we honor and remember those touched by cancer.

Our PhotoStory was live today, displaying the luminarias representing the many people we love and support. When you entered the sanctuary this morning, the overhead lights were dimmed, bathing our worship in love and light from the luminarias. Each person named on a luminary will be prayed for during the Prayers of the People, either in thanksgiving or crying out for a cure. All this is motivated by Christian love.

We will refresh the list of people fighting cancer next Sunday, March 2. Please make a point of sending an email, text, phone call, or filling out a blue prayer request and letting the people of Southminster know who you would like us to keep in prayer.

The luminaria lists follow.