

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Sunday, January 4, 2026 | On Demand on YouTube | 9a & 11:15a



Second Sunday of Christmas

Preparation for Worship

Everlasting God, the radiance of faithful souls, who brought the nations to your light and kings to the brightness of your rising: fill the world with your glory, and show yourself to all the nations. Let your true light pierce the darkness in which we dwell, signaling your reign of justice and peace made known in Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Gathering and Preparing for God's Word

Welcome and Announcements

Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

Prelude *How Brightly Shines the Morning Star* Buxtehude

* Call to Worship

Leader: The grace of God has dawned upon the world,

People: with healing for all humankind.

Leader: Jesus said: I am the light of the world:

People: Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.

All: Let us worship God!

* Hymn 152 "What Star Is This, with Beams So Bright" PUER NOBIS NASCITUR

* Prayer of Confession

God of glory,
you sent Jesus among us as the light of the world,
to reveal your love for all people.

We confess that our sin and pride
hide the brightness of your light.

We turn away from the poor.

We ignore cries for justice.

We do not strive for peace.

In your mercy, cleanse us of our sin,
and baptize us once again with your Spirit,
so that as one people, forgiven and renewed,
we may be faithful witnesses to your glory and your grace.

In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

* Assurance of Pardon

Leader: Friends, believe the good news of the gospel.

People: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

* Gloria Patri, Hymn 581

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, Amen.

GLORIA PATRI

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Sacrament of Baptism 11:15a Thomas Pickens Carsten

Congregational Response *Baptized in Water* BUNESSAN



11:15a Children in K5 - first grade are invited to leave for Children's Church.

Hearing God's Word

Prayer for Illumination

First Scripture Lesson, *Isaiah 60:1-6*

p. 602

Second Scripture Lesson, *Matthew 2:1-12*

p. 783

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon "How Many Gifts Did the Wise Men Bring?"

Responding to God's Word

* Affirmation of Faith

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

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

Offertory

O, Holy Night

Adam

* Doxology Hymn 606

OLD HUNDREDTH

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below; Praise God above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

* Prayer of Dedication

* Hymn 662

"Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies"

RATISBON

* Charge and Benediction

Triumphant Finale

Bliss

*All who are able may stand

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Leading Worship **this Morning**

Ben Dorr, *preaching*

Lauren Slingerland, *liturgist*

Stephen Ridgeway (11:15a), *sponsor*

Betsy Raines (9a), Mary Ashmore (11:15a), *scripture readers*

Allie Ablewood, *soloist*

George Howell (9a), Pam Evans (11:15a), *head ushers*

Denise Broderick, Tiffany Williams, Emily Cole,

Mandy Pruitt, Ben Dillard (9a), *greeters*

Will Edwards, Amanda Warren, Tony Threatt,

Claire Gilliland, Mary Mac Fairey (11:15a), *greeters*

WORSHIP NOTES

NURSERY

Childcare is available for infants through 4K. Our nurturing staff of experienced caregivers and parent volunteers offers a welcoming environment for children. The Nursery is located on the mezzanine level. The entrance is at Westminster Drive, at the columbarium or near the Westminster Weekday School offices. The Family Lounge, located down the stairs from the front office and straight down the hallway on the right, is available for any child caregiver and includes worship livestream, comfortable seating, and a changing table.

WORSHIP BAGS

Each Sunday we offer worship bags in the Atrium for children. The worship bags are designed to include reusable items that engage children in open ended play during worship. While children attend worship with their families, they can participate in worship and play to make meaning in faith. Please return the zipper bag and its contents each Sunday.

WELCOME TO WPC!

Please fill out a name tag and find more information about WPC at the Welcome Table in the Atrium. First time visitors are also invited to take home a WPC mug.

CONNECT WITH WESTMINSTER

Looking for ways to be involved? Please complete a Connection Card from the Ritual of Friendship pad and place it in the offering plate to express interest or sign up for an opportunity.



Texts for vocal solos and choral music may be found online by scanning this QR code.

Join Us in Welcoming

BAPTISM

This morning we welcome into our fellowship *Thomas Pickens Carsten*, son of Taylor & Elise Carsten.

WINTER CAMP RETREAT FOR 4TH AND 5TH GRADERS

WPC Kids in 4th and 5th grade are invited to a special, new retreat- Winter Camp! We'll head to Camp Fellowship after church on January 18 and return to the church by noon on January 19. During the retreat, we'll complete service projects for the camp and for our mission partners. We'll also have plenty of time to explore camp, enjoy a movie night, and deepen our faith through prayer and Bible study. Kids will grow in their relationships with one another and their understanding of service in God's family. Join us for this special retreat! Sign ups are available on the website.

BAPTISM CLASS

If you would like to have your child baptized at Westminster, our next Baptism class is scheduled for Sunday, January 11, at 12:30p. Please notify the church office if you would like to attend, and we will be glad to send you the information for this class.

BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENINGS

We are offering free blood pressure screenings the first Sunday of each month. Screenings will take place this Sunday, January 4, in the Friendship Court immediately following the 10a Sunday School hour. If you have any questions or if you are a healthcare professional and would like to help, please contact Emily Cole at ecole1217@gmail.com.

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

HIKING GROUP

The Hiking Group will meet on Tuesday, January 6, to hike to the Table Rock Summit. If interested in this hike, please contact Ralph Bouton (ralphbouton@yahoo.com).

THEOLOGY READING GROUP

The Theology Reading Group will meet in the Charter Room on Monday, January 19 at 7p.m. We will view a Journey film, Spiritual Audacity: the Abraham Joshua Heschel Story, producer/director Martin Doblmeier. All are welcome. Join us for an interesting evening.

MOBILE MAMMOGRAPHY@WPC

TUESDAY, JANUARY 20

To Schedule, call: 864-675-4875

**tell the scheduler that you wish to be scheduled for the WPC Mobile Event.

2026 OPEN STEWARDSHIP UPDATE:

As of Monday, December 29, we have received 99% of our pledge goal for 2026! If you have not yet turned in your 2026 pledge, we need you! If half the congregation raises their pledge by \$1000, and the other half by \$500, we will reach our goal. Every pledge is important, and no pledge is too small!

TEXT "wpcgreenville"

Wondering if weather will postpone an event? Need a reminder to sign up for a church-wide meal? Text "wpcgreenville" to (864)232-2424 to get up-to-date information about our life together! We promise we won't bombard you. Text replies are not frequently monitored, please note that this number does not belong to a member of WPC staff.

Adult Sunday School Term
January 4 - 18

Gifts That Last: Understanding Church Endowments

Led by Ted Gentry

Room 209 and Streaming

This class will examine church endowments through at least three lenses – legal, financial, and theological. How is an endowment created? What continuing obligations does a church have to follow the wishes of donors? How can well-considered gifts support the work of the church? Are there times when seemingly generous gifts have bad consequences – and if so, what can be done about it? Finally, what are the ethical and spiritual risks faced by a “wealthy” church? (The course will consider endowments generally; it will not focus narrowly on WPC’s endowment.)

Discussion Sunday School Class: **Led by Kathleen Reynolds (1/4)**

Room 211

Join us each week for a discussion-based Sunday School class to dive into a weekly topic and scripture passage. All are welcome to join us on a journey of faith and fellowship - come every week or come when you can. Topics change every week, and the class is facilitated by rotating members.

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 wpcgreenville | wpc-online.org | 2310 Augusta St.

THE HARBINGER

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Church Staff

Ben Dorr
Pastor & Head of Staff
bdorr@wpc-online.org

Leigh Stuckey
Executive Associate Pastor
lstuckey@wpc-online.org

Mary Kathleen Duncan
Associate Pastor
mkduncan@wpc-online.org

Lauren Slingerland
Associate Pastor
lslingerland@wpc-online.org

Nick Carson
Associate Pastor
ncarson@wpc-online.org

Terri Price
Parish Associate
tprice@wpc-online.org

Marlon Hurst
Director of Music
mhurst@wpc-online.org

Todd Monsell
Organist
tmonsell@wpc-online.org

Cara Puntch
Weekday School Director
cpuntch@wpc-online.org

Lynn Bennett
Financial Manager
lbennett@wpc-online.org

Michelle Little
Office Manager
micelle@wpc-online.org

Wendy Bagley
Secretary
wendy@wpc-online.org

Aly Friend
Director of Nurseries
alyfriend@wpc-online.org

Steve Phillips
Building Supervisor
sphillips@wpc-online.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 4 - 11, 2026

Sunday, January 4

Second Sunday of Christmas

WPCYG to Dollywood

9:00a Worship Service
10:00 Sunday School
10:55 Sunday Session Meeting
11:15 Worship Service

Monday, January 5

7:00p Game Group
8:00 Narcotics Anonymous

Tuesday, January 6

8:30a Hiking Group
12:00p Administrative Committee Meeting
Al-Anon
6:30 Westminster Book Club

Wednesday, January 7

2:30p It's Elementary
4:30 Junior & Senior Choristers
7:00 Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, January 8

10:00a Bible Study
8:00 Narcotics Anonymous

Sunday, January 11

Baptism of the Lord

9:00a Worship Service
Witness & Service Committee Meeting
10:00 Sunday School
10:55 Sunday Session Meeting
11:15 Worship Service
12:30p Baptism Class
5:00 Youth Choir Rehearsals
6:00 Youth Dinner
6:30 Middler Youth Group
Senior High Youth Group

the

HARBINGER

open minds open hearts

VOLUME LXXVIII | January 4, 2026 | No. 40

From the Pews, Liz Howell

The birth of a child is always a miracle. Even after giving birth to four of my own children and working for years as a labor and delivery nurse, witnessing the birth of a baby never gets old or mundane. When I look at a newborn baby, I'm always in awe of how God created that life in the womb. I can only imagine the feeling the wise men experienced as they saw Jesus. Try to wrap your mind around that moment. They were in the presence of the actual Son of God—the Savior of the world, the Messiah, the King of Kings! Imagine the gravity of that experience: being in the presence of the baby Jesus!

I sometimes wonder what I would have done had I seen the Son of God as a baby, like the wise men did. As a lover of all babies, I feel that my instinct would be to ask Mary if I could hold him. I imagine I would gently hold him close and sway him back and forth, just as I have done with my own babies many, many times. I would want to protect him from all the dangers and hardships of this world. It's mind-blowing to think that because of God's great love for us, he sent his perfect, only Son to be born as a baby into this world, knowing he would eventually die to save us all from our sins. What an incredible love God has for us—ALL of us! That is a love greater than any of us will ever be able to understand or comprehend.

Whenever we are grieving, lonely, in pain, discouraged, or exhausted, know that you are not alone. You are loved so deeply by God that he sent his only Son to this earth to live and suffer alongside us and for us. Because of Christ, we can have hope even in the hardest of times.

Our Vision:
Open minds open hearts.

Our Pillars:

Hospitality
Generosity
Justice
Imagination
Joy

Our Goals:

Connect
Serve
Grow

What Star Is This, with Beams So Bright 152

Capo 2: (C) (Am) (G) (C) (F) (C) (G) (C) (F)

D Bm A D G D A D G



1 What star is this, with beams so bright, more
 2 'Tis now ful-filled what God de-creed, "From
 3 While out-ward signs the star dis-plays, an
 4 O Je-sus, while the star of grace im-

(C) (G) (C) (F) (C) (G)

D A D G D A



love-ly than the noon - day light? 'Tis
 Ja-cob shall a star pro-ceed"; and
 in-ward light the Lord con-veys and
 pels us on to seek your face, let

(Am) (D7) (G) (C) (F) (C) (Dm)

Bm E7 A D G D Em



sent to an-nounce a new - born king, glad
 lo! the east - ern sa - ges stand to
 urg es them, with ten - der might, to
 not our sloth - ful hearts re - fuse the

(G) (C) (G) (C) (F) (G) (C)

A D A D G A D



ti-dings of our God to bring.
 read in heaven the Lord's com-mand.
 seek the giv-er of light light.
 guid ance of your light use.

This 18th-century Latin text calls attention to three kinds of light: the light of the star leading the Magi to the Christ-child, the inward light inspiring their journey, and Christ who is the Light of the world. The simple unison melody unites everything in a gentle arc.

for his eye is on the spar-*row*, and I know he watch-*es* me.

CELEBRATING TIME

Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies 662

1 Christ, whose glo - ry fills the skies; Christ, the true, the on - ly light;
 2 Dark and cheer-less is the morn un - ac - com - pa-nied by thee;
 3 Vis - it then this soul of mine; pierce the gloom of sin and grief;

Sun of Righ-teous-ness, a - rise; tri-umph o'er the shades of night;
 joy - less is the day's re-tur-n till thy mer-cy's beams I see;
 fill me, ra - dian - cy di-vine; scat - ter all my un - be - lief;

Day-spring from on high, be near; Day-star, in my heart ap - pear.
 till they in - ward light im - part, cheer my eyes and warm my heart.
 more and more thy - self dis - play, shin - ing to the per - fect day.

This well-crafted morning hymn opens by celebrating daylight as an image of Christ, the true Light, then ponders life without light, and culminates in a prayer for inward light. The tune's name honors its German roots: Ratisbon is the former English name for Regensburg.