



Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

Preparation for **Worship**

“Thinking gloomily of the sins and shortcomings of others, it suddenly came to me to remember my own offenses, just as heinous as those of others. If I concern myself with my own sins and lament them, if I remember my own failures and lapses, I will not be resentful of others. This was most cheering and lifted the load of gloom from my mind. It makes one unhappy to judge people and happy to love them.”

Dorothy Day

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 "It Is Well With My Soul" arr. Hayes

Introit (11:15) "The Lord Is God" Gambrell

* Call to Worship *Philippians 2:5-8*

Leader: Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,
People: who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited,

Leader: but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness.

People: And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death - even death on a cross.

All: Let us worship God!

* Hymn No. 805 "Come Sing to God" ELLACOMBE

* Prayer of Confession

Almighty God, forgive us for thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought to think. We have succumbed to the world’s wisdom, and lived by the values of status, power, prestige, and control. We have been blind to our own self-righteousness, we have been judgmental toward one another, and we have noticed the speck in our neighbor’s eye without addressing the log in our own eye. Let your mercy mold our hearts anew. Grant us grace that overwhelms our shallow faith, so that we would be transformed by your truth and emboldened by your love. In all that we say and do, help us to walk with the humility of Jesus Christ, through whom we pray. Amen.

* Assurance of Pardon

Leader: Friends, believe the good news of the gospel.
People: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

* Gloria Patri (Hymnal, No. 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.

Hearing **God’s Word**

Prayer for Illumination
 Epistle Lesson, Ephesians 4:1-6 p. 951
 Children’s Choir Anthem (11:15) “Help Us Accept Each Other” Kaan
hymn #754

Children in K5-1st grade are invited to leave for Children’s Church

Gospel Lesson, *Luke 18:9-14* p. 853

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon “Two Prayers, One Temple”

Responding to **God’s Word**

* Affirmation of Faith From *The Confession of 1967*

Wise and virtuous men and women through the ages have sought the highest good in devotion to freedom, justice, peace, truth, and beauty. Yet all human virtue, when seen in the light of God’s love in Jesus Christ, is found to be infected by self-interest and hostility. All people, good and bad alike, are in the wrong before God and helpless without God’s forgiveness.

The new life in Christ takes shape in a community in which people know that God loves and accepts them in spite of what they are. They therefore accept themselves and love others, knowing that no one has any ground on which to stand, except God’s grace.

Choral Call to Prayer (11:15) "Remember Not, O God" SOUTHWELL

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 "How Lovely Is Your Dwelling Place" Kallman

* Doxology (Hymnal, No. 606)

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 No. 702 “Christ Be Beside Me” BUNESSAN

* Charge and Benediction

* Choral Response (11:15) "Glory Be to the Father" Stanford

* Postlude Toccata in G Major Dubois

**All who are able may stand*

Leading Worship **this Morning**

Ben Dorr, **preaching**
 Lauren Slingerland, **liturgist**
 Nancy Smith, **organist/pianist**
 Kelly Kemp, Judy McKenney, Hunter Ditsch, Mark Kemp, **vocalists (9a)**
 Sanctuary Choir Ensemble (11:15a)
 Junior and Senior Choristers (11:15a)
 Elizabeth Campbell (9a), Cara Puntch (11:15a), **lay readers**
 Brandon Coker (9a), Jason Farmer (11:15a), **head ushers**
 Tony Atkins, Bob Dellert, Michael Dixon, Ben Edwards,
 Keith Stevenson, (9a) **greeters**
 Mary Ashmore, Ashley Gettys, Ross Glidewell,
 Neil Shurley, Laura Williams Sanders, (11:15a) **greeters**

Worship Notes

NURSERY

Childcare is available for infants through four-year kindergarten. Our childcare program provides safe, secure nurseries for our babies and toddlers during worship services. Our nurturing staff of experienced caregivers and parent volunteers offers a welcoming environment to all children.

CHILDREN’S CHURCH

During worship, children in K5-1st grade follow one of our ministers out for Children’s Church. Children engage in worship education with Bible stories and crafts. Parents can pick their children up in the Children’s Church room across from the library following worship.

PRAYER REQUESTS

As a congregation that prays with and for one another, Westminster invites you to share your prayer requests using the cards located in the Ritual of Friendship pad at the end of each pew. You may complete a card and leave it in the offering plate so that the pastors and/or prayer chain team may pray for you. If you wish to join the prayer chain, please indicate that on your card.

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.

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.

With Thanksgiving We Celebrate

BIRTH

The birth of a son, *Samuel Warren Saari*, to David & Erin Saari on Saturday, August 28, 2021.

Membership@WPC INTERESTED IN JOINING WESTMINSTER?

Visitors interested in learning more about Westminster and joining the church are invited to attend our New Member Class from 9-10:30a on Sunday, September 26. Those who attend the class are invited to become members during the 11:15a worship service that same day or on a future new member Sunday. Childcare is available. Please contact Julia Watkins (jwatkins@wpc-online.org) at 232-2424 to learn more and RSVP.

GIVING HEARTS • Giving@WPC

DISASTER RELIEF

In response to Hurricane Ida and the earthquake in Haiti, Westminster has made a special gift to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. If you would like to join in providing relief to those affected, you may designate today’s offering for “PDA.”

BASKETBALL REGISTRATION

Children and youth ages 5K-grade 12 are invited to register for the church basketball season. Online player registration opened Monday, September 13 and continues through Sunday, October 10. The Session will determine any appropriate pandemic precautions and protocols. WPC members interested in being a coach or assistant coach may contact Bryant Puntch (864-915-5686). Registration may be accessed on the church's website at wpc-online.org/events_registration/youth_basketball/.

HIKING GROUP

The first hike of the season is scheduled for Friday, September 24. Due to trail conditions we will not be going to John Rock as originally planned but instead going to the Shining Rock Wilderness area off of the Blue Ridge Parkway. We will combine the Sam Knob trail with a portion of the Flat Laurel Creek trail into a loop of 5 miles. The hike is moderate with an elevation gain of 500 feet. The Sam Knob summit overlook is at elevation 6,000 feet. We will be meeting at the Black Balsam trailhead parking lot on the Parkway at 10a. Contact Ralph Bouton (ralphbouton@yahoo.com) if you plan to attend this hike. Carpools can be coordinated when we know who all is going.

ENJOY WESTMINSTER'S FRONT PORCH

We hope you will feel at home in Westminster's redesigned Atrium. The space is meant to feel like Westminster's front porch, a place for you to gather, enjoy fellowship with one another, and learn more about who we are. The high tables were designed and built by Soteria, one of our local partners, and the gathering tables were designed and built by Westminster member Dale Gosnell, and reflect the Westminster crosses in their base. In the coming weeks you will see more pieces added to the Atrium. During the worship service, everything can be turned toward the screen to ensure you are able to participate in the service. The Atrium can also serve as a meeting space.

WOMEN OF WESTMINSTER

SAVE THE DATE

On Thursday, September 30, at 6:30p, join us for the Fall Women of Westminster Social at the home of LeAnne White (9 Rockingham Rd., 29607). Contact Coleman Dixon at 607-8778 for more information!

CHURCHWIDE CHILI COOK-OFF

Join us for the Churchwide Chili Cook Off/Lunch on October 3 hosted by the Women of Westminster in the Green Lot after worship. Lunch will be available, as well. Look out for more information in the Congregational News for sign ups, to purchase lunch and more! Please reach out to Coleman Dixon at 864-607-8778 for more information, or to enter the Chili Cookoff!

ADVENT DEVOTIONS

It's that time of year again when we are looking for volunteers to write a short devotional to be included in the 2021 Advent Devotions series. Email Josie Williams (josiwilliams07@gmail.com) if you would be willing to help with this.

THE HARBINGER
Westminster Presbyterian Church
2310 Augusta Street
Greenville, South Carolina 29605
(864) 232-2424
www.wpc-online.org

THE HARBINGER: (USPS No. 764160)
Published weekly by the Westminster Presbyterian Church, 2310 Augusta Street, Greenville SC 29605. Periodical postage paid at Greenville SC 29605.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS
September 19 - 26, 2021

Sunday, September 19
17th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Interfaith Hospitality Network
9:00a Worship Service
10:00 Sunday School
11:15 Worship Service
12:30p Stated Session Meeting
12:45 Connections Group
5:00 Middler Youth Group
5:15 Senior High Choir Rehearsal
6:30 Middler Choir Rehearsal
Senior High Youth Group

Monday, September 20
Interfaith Hospitality Network

Tuesday, September 21
Interfaith Hospitality Network

Wednesday, September 22
Interfaith Hospitality Network
9:30a Weekday Chapel
9:45a Weekday Chapel
10:00a Weekday Chapel
2:15p WPC Kids Afterschool
2:45 It's Elementary
4:30 Junior & Senior Choristers
7:00 Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, September 23
Interfaith Hospitality Network

Friday, September 24
Interfaith Hospitality Network
10:00a Hiking Group

Sunday, September 26
18th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Interfaith Hospitality Network leaves
9:00a Worship Service
10:00 Sunday School
11:15 Worship Service
5:00 Middler Youth Group
5:15 Senior High Choir Rehearsal
6:30 Middler Choir Rehearsal
Senior High Youth Group

the
HARBINGER
open minds open hearts

VOLUME LXXIV | September 19, 2021 | No. 19

From the Pews, Kathleen Reynolds

After reading Luke 18:9-14, one might consider how easily the reader can spot the person who pleased God. Jesus makes it clear. Feel the weary tedium in Jesus' voice as he recounts the Pharisee's boasts in verse 11, "God, I thank you that I am not like other people." I mean, wow. It is hard to imagine someone saying that aloud, let alone in a prayer. Who does he think he is? Jesus immediately tips us off that of the pair, the Pharisee is not the one to model.

However, the Pharisee's arrogance is easy to fall into. How many times have you scrolled through social media and self-righteously thought, "Man, I would never do that!" or have seen a news story and thought, "How can they be so short sighted?"

Oh goodness, I'm afraid to admit which one I am. It is not hard to guess that I am ashamed because I am a Pharisee. Yikes, that is hard to say. My name is Kathleen Reynolds and I am a Pharisee. I am guilty of judging others through my own thoughts and actions. I'm guilty of thinking, "Well, at least I'm not that much of a sinner," and comparing myself to others.

Verse 13 states, "But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'" This is a more faithful way to approach God. She wants us to be humble; She wants us to admit our shortcomings. She wants us to be our best selves through her. Moral consistency cannot be accomplished if we pridefully pattern ourselves on anything but God.

I recently read in my daily Bible devotional the story of Solomon. God told Solomon he could ask for anything. In essence She gave Solomon carte blanche. Instead of asking for riches or victory over enemies, Solomon asked God for wisdom. This humble request showed God that this wise king of Israel understood the essential power of His guidance, grace and love. So often these days, we can feel like we've got this. We can power through and do something solely on our own merit. God wants us to realize that the potential for righteousness is always within us, but only accomplished through him.

This week, I will attempt to be less like this Pharisee. Looking for and honoring the model of God in all our fellow humans, however imperfect, is an ambitious but worthy goal.

welcome back!

Join WPC in Sunday School starting
Sunday, September 12 at 10a.

3K/4K (M105)

Led by Sarah & Bryan Kelley, Amy & Brad Hawkins,
Grace Loveless, and Sarah Matthews

5K/1st/2nd (Snack Room)

Led by Ashley & Gram Praytor,
Lindsay & Keith Jones, Tavia & Bill Young,
and Rachel & Parks Workman

3rd/4th/5th (Room 112)

Led by Mae Todd & Bo Mullins, Emily & John Merrell,
and Lindsey & Brian Donlan

Middlers (Youth Suite)

Feasting on the Word

Led by Scott Clark, Jay Culclasure,
Kim Kent, and Meredith Partridge

Senior Highs (Youth Suite – Game Room side)

Wired Word

Led by Ben Alexander, Kelley Barnhardt,
Kim DuBose, and Kate Weaver Patterson

One Adult Sunday School (Fellowship Hall)

Led by Leigh Stuckey

*We Believe What?: An Introduction
to Christian Doctrine*

To be alive today is to be a theologian. Each of us has a unique paradigm through which we understand God, one another, creation, and the church. Not quite sure if you qualify? Or wondering what the Presbyterian Church thinks about it all? Join us for this brief on Reformed Christian Doctrine. We'll delve into questions around predestination, revelation, authority, providence, and sin. "Come," as God says to the prophet Isaiah, "let us argue it out!"

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