

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

Sunday, December 16, 2018
11:15 a.m.

Third Sunday of Advent

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

It is both terrible and comforting to dwell in the inconceivable nearness of God, and so to be loved by God that the first and last gift is infinity and inconceivability itself. But we have no choice. God is with us.

Karl Rahner

GATHERING THE COMMUNITY

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

PREPARING FOR GOD'S WORD

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Bo & Mae Todd Mullins, Elizabeth Todd, Pearson and Bowen

PRELUDE "Coventry Carol" arr. Hayes

* CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: We gather because we are waiting.
People: We are waiting for the coming of Christ anew.
Leader: We work because we are waiting.
People: We are waiting for a world of love and justice.
Leader: We worship because we are waiting.
People: We are waiting for God, whose glory is about to be revealed.
Let us worship God!

* HYMN OF PRAISE No. 93 TRURO
"Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates"

* PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Merciful God, always with us, always coming: we confess that we do not know how to prepare for your Advent. We have forgotten how to hope in miracles; we have ignored the promise of your kingdom; we get distracted by all the busyness of this season. Forgive us, O God. Grant us the simple wonder of the shepherds, the intelligent courage of the Magi, and the patient faith of Mary and Joseph, that we may journey with them to Bethlehem and find the good news of a child born for us. 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.

OFFERING

Offertory "Lo, How A Rose E'er Blooming" arr. Whitworth

* Doxology (Hymnal, No. 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.

* Prayer of Dedication

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

HYMN No. 143 "Angels, from the Realms of Glory" REGENT SQUARE

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

"Oh Come, Little Children"
Presented by the Junior and Senior Choristers

Oh Come, Little Children Mayo

Nova, Nova Bedford

Sarah Sanders, Libby Graves, soloists

Bethlehem Night Taylor

Budd Reynolds, George Blount, Bobby Hartman, Claire Puntch, Eliza Barker, Elizabeth Todd Mullins

Hurry to Bethlehem Pote

Helen Ratterree, Henley Gilreath, Cam Warren

On This Day Earth Shall Ring Brooke

Rollins Beck, Anna Puntch, soloists

How Far Is It to Bethlehem Ijames

McCrae Mattice, Madeline Barker, soloists

Walk in the Light Thomas

Alex Hoffman, Louisa Palmer, Sadie Mattice, Laney Lucas, Ramsey Glidewell, Sarah Katherine White, Caroline Thomasson, Laney Palmer

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

* HYMN No. 113 "Angels We Have Heard on High" GLORIA

* CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE "Wondrous Tidings" Simone

THE CHILDREN'S CHOIRS

Kathryn Knauer, Children's Choir Coordinator
Mark Kemp, Music Director
Martha Beaudrot, Accompanist

Junior Choristers

Eliza Barker, Cullen Beck, George Blount, Caroline Cameron, Charlotte Clark, Grier Clark, Annie Cole, Caroline Dixon, Caroline Doar, Vivian Donlan, Henley Gilreath, Mills Hardaway, Bobby Hartman, Blair Jones, Daniel Knauer, Emerson Lapins, Lucy Meredith, Elizabeth Todd Mullins, Cate Normington, Ava Leigh Pate, JD Paylor, Claire Puntch, Helen Ratterree, Budd Reynolds, Ellen Reynolds, William Swann, Cam Warren, Molly Willis

Senior Choristers

Madeline Barker, Rollins Beck, Ellie Coker, Lilly Coker, Lucy Cole, Natalie Dixon, Mason Donlan, Cooper Dorr, Davis Fairey, Mary Mac Fairey, Hamilton Gary, Ramsey Glidewell, Parker Godwin, Peyton Godwin, Libby Graves, Clarissa Hart, J.P. Hartman, Alex Hoffiman, Amelia Kent, Amelia Key, Bradley Lucas, Laney Lucas, McCrae Mattice, Sadie Mattice, Laney Palmer, Louisa Palmer, Anna Puntch, Cooper Ray, Lilly Rayneri, Charlie Rowan, Sarah Sanders, Caroline Thomasson, Zach Warren, Molly Weiss, Sarah Katherine White, Kass Williams, Sawyer Woodard

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WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

HEAD USHERS: 9:00 a.m. Butler Mullins
11:15 a.m. Tonya Cochran
SPONSOR: 11:15 a.m. Sarah-Ann Davis
GREETERS: 9:00 a.m. Pete Roe, Roxanne Cromartie
Gaye Sprague
11:15 a.m. Steve Johnson, Michael Hoffman
Coleman Kirven
LITURGIST: 9:00 a.m. Mary Kathleen Duncan
11:15 a.m. Ben Dorr
LAY READER: 9:00 a.m. Annie Leonard

TRAFFIC POLICE OFFICER

A Greenville city police officer will be on duty from 9:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. to help people cross the street from the other side of Augusta Road.

STREAMING

All worship services at Westminster are broadcast via live video streaming. Navigate to the home page of the church website at www.wpc-online.org and click the link "Worship via Live Streaming."

CHURCH NOTES

Musicians leading in worship this Sunday are:

Nancy Smith, organist
9:00 a.m.
Mark Kemp, tenor
11:15 a.m.
Junior Choristers
Senior Choristers

This Sunday, the Children's Choirs of Westminster will proclaim the traditional nativity story at the 11:15 worship service through scripture and song. We are thankful for their voices of leadership this Advent. To preserve the spirit of worship during the service, please refrain from using cell phones and cameras to take pictures or videos. A full DVD of the service will be available in the church office.

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.

During the 9:00 a.m. worship service, children in rising K5-1st grade follow one of our ministers out for Children's Church in Room 206.

LET US PRAY FOR:

Susan Hicken and family
Susan Jones and family
The family of Alan Elmore

2019 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

As of Tuesday, December 11, we have received \$2,176,217 in pledges toward our 2019 budget goal of \$2,573,739.

For your convenience, pledge cards are in the pews, or you may mail in your pledge or send it by email to the Church Financial Secretary, Sherri Owens, at sherri@wpc-online.org.

CHERUB CHOIR PROGRAM

This Sunday evening at 5:45 p.m., just prior to the church dinner, the Cherub Choir will revisit their Christmas celebration that was canceled last Sunday due to the weather. Join them in the fellowship hall to hear traditional carols and the traditional Christmas story.

BIRTH

A daughter, Elizabeth Hazel Howell, was born to George & Liz Howell on Thursday, November 29, 2018 in Greenville.

58th ANNUAL SERVICE OF LESSONS & CAROLS

On Sunday, December 23, the congregation of Westminster will gather for the 58th Annual Service of Lessons & Carols at both morning worship services of 9:00 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. This traditional service, begun in 1918 at King's College in Cambridge, England, utilizes scripture readings and carols to tell the prophecies, birth, and coming Kingdom of Christ. The Westminster Sanctuary Choir will be joined by Nancy Smith, organist, and the Westminster Brass.

In Memoriam

Henry Alan Elmore
11/1/1938 - 12/11/2018

"In my Father's House
are many mansions."

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16

The Session has called a congregational meeting for this Sunday, December 16, immediately following the 11:15 a.m. worship service. The purpose of the meeting is to elect an Associate Pastor Nominating Committee. This APNC will search for an Associate Pastor who will be responsible primarily for children's ministry and programming, and will succeed Barbara Stoop upon her retirement in 2019.

The following members are nominated for election to the APNC:

Ben Alexander
Kelley Barnhardt
Kathryn Freedman
Cathy Grills
Lydia Kellett
Kevin Lancaster
Elizabeth Palmer
Cara Puntch
Neil Shurley

We will continue to wear nametags each Sunday. Please find them near entrances and gathering areas and share your name with others. You'll be glad you did!

THEOLOGY READING GROUP

The Theology Reading Group will meet **Monday, December 17, at 7:00 p.m.** in the **Charter Room**. This will be a Christmas gathering – a time for sharing light refreshments and a Christmas poem, story, or memorable experience. All are invited for this special evening of fellowship.

ADULT GROUPS

- **Sharing Creativity Group:** Will meet **Sunday, December 16, at 1:30 p.m.** in **Room 211** to make cards. **Leader:** Cathy Grills (pcgrills@yahoo.com).
- **Needle Arts Group:** Will meet **Wednesday, December 19, at 6:30 p.m.** in the Entrance Pavilion. **Leader:** Terry Gentry (tmgentry@charter.net).

BAPTISM CLASS

If you are interested in having your child or children baptized at Westminster, you are invited to attend a brief class on baptism taught by Ben Dorr. The next class will be **Sunday, January 13, at 4:00 p.m.** in the **Charter Room**. Please email Michelle in the church office at michelle@wpc-online.org if you are planning to attend.

WESTMINSTER BOOK CLUB

Because of a scheduling conflict, Westminster's Book Club will wait until **Tuesday, February 5,** to discuss the book *Swing Time* by Zadie Smith. We meet from 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. in the church library. New people are always welcome!

SAVE THE DATE

Women of Westminster:

February 22-24

Women's Retreat

More details and sign-ups to come!

CHRISTMAS TREES

To make our sanctuary, entrance pavilion and sanctuary atrium festive for the Christmas season, the Women of Westminster, the Senior High Girls, and the Lightly Seasoned group decorated this year's Christmas trees. The live wreaths on the exterior of the campus were placed by Bill & Barbara Wallace. Thank you to all!

AN IHN THANK YOU

A big thank you to all the volunteers who donated their time and energy during the IHN week of December 9-16. Despite the winter weather, you came out to share genuine hospitality and nourishing meals with families experiencing homelessness. We also owe our gratitude to the generous donations of bookbags, duffels, and totes to help our homeless families carry around their clothes and other belongings. While these items may seem like a small detail to us, they mean the world to the homeless families who receive them. Thank you.

RETIREMENT GIVING

For those 70 years of age or older, you can make a direct transfer of up to \$100,000 from your IRA to Westminster Presbyterian Church. Though you will not get a charitable deduction, the withdrawal can serve as your required minimum distribution. The money will not be taxed and will not count toward your adjusted gross income. If you have any questions, please contact Sherri Owens, the church's Financial Secretary.

**FINANCIAL MINISTRY
2018 BUDGET UPDATE**

2018 Pledges	\$2,522,213
Amount Received	\$1,996,077
Pledges Outstanding	(\$526,136)

Our auditing firm has informed us that we must close our books on December 31. Please have any contributions you wish to show on your 2018 statement in by December 31, 2018. By fulfilling your pledge, you enable us to keep faith with our mission partners. Thank you.

**THE HARBINGER
WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**

**2310 Augusta Street
Greenville, South Carolina 29605
(864) 232-2424**

www.wpc-online.org

THE HARBINGER: (USPS No. 764160)
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CHURCH STAFF

Church 232-2424	School 232-5766
Pastor	Ben Dorr
	bdorr@wpc-online.org
Associate Pastor	Barbara Stoop
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Associate Pastor	Leigh Stuckey
	lstuckey@wpc-online.org
Associate Pastor	Mary Kathleen Duncan
	mkduncan@wpc-online.org
Parish Associate for Older Adults	Amos Workman
	aworkman@wpc-online.org
Pastor Emeritus	Zane Moore
Director of Music	Mark Kemp
	mkemp@wpc-online.org
Children's Choir Coordinator	Kathryn Knauer
	kknauer@wpc-online.org
Volunteer Coordinator	Jennifer Dillard
	jdillard@wpc-online.org
Organist	Nancy Smith
	nls1949@aol.com
Weekday School Director	Cara Puntch
	cpuntch@wpc-online.org
Financial Secretary	Sherri Owens
	sherri@wpc-online.org
Office Manager	Michelle Little
	michelle@wpc-online.org
Secretary	Wendy Bagley
	wendy@wpc-online.org
Director of Nurseries	Janell Pitman
	jpitman@wpc-online.org
Director of Hospitality	Lisa Ridge
	lisa@wpc-online.org
Building Supervisor	Steve Phillips
	stevep30@bellsouth.net

LIBRARY/POINSETTIA MEMORIALS

Those who wish to remember loved ones during the Christmas Season may do so in two ways. Poinsettias for the sanctuary may be purchased for \$15.00, or money may be given to buy library books. Poinsettias will decorate the sanctuary at the Lessons & Carols and Christmas Eve Services. Please fill out the slip below or contact the church office, 232-2424. Donors may pick up their poinsettias after the Christmas Eve Service you choose to attend. Orders must be placed by **Sunday, December 16**. Online orders may also be made through the website.

Donor _____
 In Memory of _____
 In Memory of _____
 In Honor of _____
 In Honor of _____
 Library Amount \$ _____ OR Poinsettias x \$15.00 = \$ _____

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December 16-22, 2018

SUNDAY

- IHN departs*
- 9:00 a.m. Worship Service
 - 10:00 a.m. Sunday School
 - 11:15 a.m. Worship Service
 - 12:15 p.m. Congregational Meeting
 - 12:30 p.m. Stated Session Meeting
 - 1:30 p.m. Sharing Creativity Card Making
 - 5:45 p.m. Cherub Choir Program
 - 6:30 p.m. Christmas Dinner
 - 7:30 p.m. *Small, Dancing Light*
by WPC Sanctuary Choir/
Orchestra
 - 8:00 p.m. Alcoholics Anonymous

MONDAY

- 6:15 p.m. NAMI
- 7:00 p.m. Theology Reading Group
- 8:00 p.m. Narcotics Anonymous

TUESDAY

- 11:00 a.m. Staff Meeting
- 12:00 p.m. AI-Anon Meeting

WEDNESDAY

- 9:30 a.m. Weekday School Chapel
- 9:45 a.m. Weekday School Chapel
- 3:00 p.m. "It's Elementary!" & Tweens
- 6:30 p.m. Needle Arts Group Meeting
- 7:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

THURSDAY

- 10:00 a.m. Thursday Bible Study
- 8:00 p.m. Narcotics Anonymous



*"A shoot shall come out of the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots."
Isaiah 11:1*

I received an orchid last summer during a prolonged illness. Having strong horticultural genes, but not an overly green thumb, I decided to follow the directions on the attached tag very precisely. I placed my orchid in a well-lit area and watered it with three well-chosen ice cubes a week. This seemed to work beautifully for a number of months. The flowers did fall off once, only to return again a few weeks later. However, after that I noticed a gradual browning of the single stalk starting from the top and working its way eventually all the way to the base. Saddened, I began to wonder if this was a sign that it was going to wither and die, or that I was too horrible a person to keep a plant alive, or most likely that I just didn't get the right gardening genes. Surprisingly the leaves at the base remained green so I continued on with the ice cubes each week. Week after week I have faithfully placed three cubes. About a month ago, I noticed a bright green stalk popping its way up from between the leaves and it is now about 5 inches long!

Today's scripture lesson, Isaiah 11:1-10, is a very familiar one to us. Though Isaiah, the prophet and poet, lived during a very grim time, he tries to paint a picture of what God yearns for the world. He is creating an image of new life springing up in a totally unexpected place. Life from death like the shoot from the stump. Jesse, to whom he refers, was the father of King David who was hailed in Isaiah's time as the last great king. Isaiah is envisioning a new "branch" who will be greater than all who have come before. From this new branch will be a king with whom the spirit will rest. This king will be wise, powerful, and understanding. He will bring justice for the poor, be obedient to God, and will be clothed in righteousness and faithfulness.

In this world God yearns for, there is knowledge by all people of a living God and a desire for peace where "The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them." Oh, what a wonderful world this would be!

I don't know that I have the stump of Jesse on my desk, but I hope my orchid continues to grow and flourish. It is a sign that beauty can sprout from things that seem dead or dying especially if they are cared for. It reminds me of how well I was cared for when I was sick, by my family and by many members of this church family. It will remind me of God's dream for this world and help me find my purpose and live into it. I hope it will keep me encouraged even when the world can seem discouraging. I know that God's purposes are reached through us, his children. We can work toward creating the world he longs for through our gifts and talents, through our generous giving of time and resources, through the kindness and respect we show to others, and through actively centering our lives on our Christian faith.

Mandy Pruitt

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GATHERING THE COMMUNITY

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

People: And also with you.

PREPARING FOR GOD'S WORD

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Libby & Meg Holleman

PRELUDE "Coventry Carol" arr. Hayes

* CALL TO WORSHIP *(Psalm 72:18-19)*

Leader: Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,
who alone does wondrous things.

**People: Blessed be God's glorious name forever;
may God's glory fill the whole earth.**

All: Let us worship God.

* HYMN OF PRAISE No. 87 GENEVAN 42

"Comfort, Comfort Now My People"

* PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of tenderness and love, breathe your grace into our lives. Forgive our wandering ways and our stubborn wills. When we lose our way, when we forget who and whose we are, we pray that you would carry us back to your paths of peace. Lead us to a place where we would see all people as Christ sees them. Renew us in faith and in hope, so that our homes and our hearts would always reflect Christ's love, for it is in His name that 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.

Children in K5-first grade leave for Children's Church.

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HEARING GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Isaiah 11:1-10 (O.T. p. 558)

GOSPEL LESSON Luke 3:1-18 (N.T. p. 834)

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON Ben Dorr

“Waiting in Line”

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

* AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (From *A Brief Statement of Faith*)

We trust in God, whom Jesus called Abba, Father. In sovereign love God created the world good and makes everyone equally in God's image, male and female, of every race and people, to live as one community. But we rebel against God; we hide from our Creator. Ignoring God's commandments, we violate the image of God in others and ourselves, accept lies as truth, exploit neighbor and nature, and threaten death to the planet entrusted to our care. We deserve God's condemnation. Yet God acts with justice and mercy to redeem creation. In everlasting love, the God of Abraham and Sarah chose a covenant people to bless all families of the earth. Hearing their cry, God delivered the children of Israel from the house of bondage. Loving us still, God makes us heirs with Christ of the covenant. Like a mother who will not forsake her nursing child, like a father who runs to welcome the prodigal home, God is faithful still.

CALL TO PRAYER “While We Are Waiting, Come” Cloninger

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION & THANKSGIVING

THE LORD'S PRAYER

OFFERING

Offertory “Prepare the Way of the Lord” Hayes

* Doxology (Hymnal, No. 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.

* Prayer of Dedication

* HYMN No. 106 BEREDEN VAG

“Prepare the Way, O Zion”

* CHARGE & BENECTION

* POSTLUDE “Wondrous Tidings” Simone

**All who are able may stand*

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OFFERING

Offertory “Prepare the Way of the Lord” Hayes

* Doxology (Hymnal, No. 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.

* Prayer of Dedication

* HYMN No. 106 BEREDEN VAG

“Prepare the Way, O Zion”

* CHARGE & BENECTION

* POSTLUDE “Wondrous Tidings” Simone

**All who are able may stand*

If you are visiting this morning, we extend a special welcome to you.

Westminster Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is a community of faith open to all.