

the

HARBINGER

open minds open hearts

VOLUME LXXIII | MAY 2, 2021 | No. 51B

From the Pews, Sarah Matthews

Evangelism – It is a word we hear throughout the world of Christianity. It is something the Bible talks about repeatedly. Evangelizing is something we are called to do as children of God. It is something we are, in fact, commanded to do. And the Lord only commands us to do so many things – love your neighbor as yourself and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. But what does that even mean? More importantly, what does that look like in the modern times? Sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ is an important calling as Christians and this week’s scripture from the Book of Acts offers us important insights and lessons about preaching to others from the perspective of a man named Philip.

The Apostles commissioned seven men in the congregation at Jerusalem, including Philip, to supervise the church’s ministry to the need of its widows and the poor. After the prosecution of the Church of Jerusalem, Philip fled to Samaria where he preached the Gospel to the Samaritans. After this, Philip was sent by God to walk along the road from Jerusalem to Gaza, which is where our passage this week begins.

The road from Jerusalem to Gaza was a deserted, lonely road, and certainly an odd place to be called to preach. Nonetheless, Philip goes where he encounters a eunuch. The eunuch was from Ethiopia and was an official of the royal court. The text states that he was returning from worshiping in Jerusalem when Philip encounters him reading Isaiah 53. Philip’s question to the eunuch is one of my favorite parts of the passage: “Do you understand what you are reading?” Such a simple question to ask a complete stranger, and yet something to which we can all relate. Philip proceeds to climb into his chariot to preach about Jesus and the eunuch is later baptized. The passage ends with Philip being taken away by the Holy Spirit, something that didn’t even surprise the eunuch but rather caused him to rejoice.

What I took away from the story is that preaching or evangelizing can happen anywhere. We can be called to talk about Jesus from a pulpit, a desert road, a college campus, a golf course, on a walk down the Swamp Rabbit Trail, or across a table at a coffee shop. The Lord simply commands us to “arise and go” and trust that where he leads us will serve purpose, bear fruit, and bring glory to his Kingdom. Philip next appears in Azotus where he then preaches to much larger crowds. Some days we may be called to serve and love one person, and other days we may serve many. What the Lord cares about is that we preach. May we all be listening for where the Lord calls us and know that we are equipped to climb into a chariot and ask “Do you understand what you are reading?”

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Sunday, May 2, 2021 | In-Person at 11:15a | Fifth Sunday of Easter



Preparation for **Worship**

Almighty God, we pray for your blessing on the church in this place. Here may the faithful find salvation, and the careless be awakened. Here may the doubting find faith, and the anxious be encouraged. Here may the tempted find help, and the sorrowful comfort. Here may the weary find rest, and the strong be renewed. Here may the aged find consolation and the young be inspired, through Jesus Christ our Lord. 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 "All Creatures of Our God and King" Evanovich

Introit "Surely" Langston

* Call to Worship (from Ephesians 2:17-20)

Leader: Christ came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off
and peace to you who were near.

People: **So then we are no longer strangers and aliens,
but we are citizens with the saints
and also members of the household of God,
built upon the foundation of the
apostles and prophets,
with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone.**

All: **Let us worship God!**

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

* Prayer of Confession

**Have mercy on us, Holy God,
for we have hardened our hearts
against the movement of your Spirit.
When your Spirit leads us to new places,
we ask for the familiar.
When your Spirit brings us new people,
we ask them to prove themselves.
When your Spirit beckons us to grow in new ways,
we demand more of the status quo.
Forgive our selfishness, and restore our faith.
Let the expansiveness of your love
and the depth of your grace be our guides,
so that our church would be a place of healing and hope,
and in the face of the stranger,
we would see the face of Christ. Amen.**

* Assurance of Pardon

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

The Sacrament of Baptism

*Jeffrey Harrison Beck
Rollins Lucille Beck
Cullen Nicklaus Beck*

Hearing **God's Word**

Prayer for Illumination

Gospel Lesson, *Matthew 28:16-20*

New Testament Lesson, *Acts 8:26-40*

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

"Was There Hesitation in His Heart?"

Anthem

"Take Me to the Water"

Dilworth

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Responding to **God's Word**

* Affirmation of Faith, *The Apostles' Creed*

**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.

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Charge and Benediction

Choral Response

“Go Out with Joy”

Davis

Postlude

“The Heavens Declare the Glory of God”

Marcello

Leading Worship **this Morning**

Ben Dorr, *preaching*

Lauren Slingerland, *liturgist*

Michael Dixon, *sponsor*

Nancy Smith, *organist/pianist*

Emily Sweezey, Kelly Kemp, Judy McKenney, Hunter Ditsch, Mark Kemp, *vocalists*

Brad Lucas, *head usher*

Caroline Clark, Scott Clark, *greeters*

**All who are able may stand*

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Join Us in Welcoming

BAPTISM

We welcome *Jeffrey Harrison Beck, Rollins Lucille Beck, and Cullen Nicklaus Beck*, children of *Jeff & Mary Beck*, in our worship service this morning.

This morning we welcomed into our fellowship *Robert Heyward Felt*, son of *Tyler & Mary Knight Felt*, at our 9a recorded service.

With Thanksgiving We Celebrate

The birth of a daughter, *Sawyer Steele Powell*, to *Michael & Kaley Powell* on 4/20/2021.

OPEN HEARTS • Gathering@WPC

CONFIRMING THE CLASSES OF 2020 AND 2021

SUNDAY, MAY 9 3P

We welcome your prayers and invite you to join us for worship in the Green Lot as we recognize our newest Confirmands. We will be celebrating 57(!) 9th and 10th graders as the newest adult members of Westminster. Pre-registration through the WPC website is required.

PARTICIPATING IN WORSHIP FROM HOME ON SUNDAY MORNING?

Our pre-recorded service will continue to air on our website at 9a, and on our social media platforms. Our in-person worship service will air on our website via livestream at 11:15a. The Harbinger that you receive in the mail will be for our pre-recorded worship. If you would like the Harbinger for our 11:15a livestream worship, you may download it from our website at <https://wpc-online.org/sermon-archive>.

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

OPEN MINDS • Education@WPC

SUNDAY MORNING

ZOOM BIBLE STUDY

The Pastor's Zoom Bible Study is scheduled for Sunday mornings at 10a and will run through early May. Leigh Stuckey will lead participants in engaging and provoking discussions based on the texts of the day. We hope you will join us.

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 918 5587 5662

Passcode: 785672

ZOOM CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

Join us each Sunday for a Zoom Children's Sunday School at 10a.

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 980 3425 3372

Passcode: 700049

IT'S ELEMENTARY

Our last It's Elementary pop up will be Wednesday, May 5. Pink Mama's Ice Cream Truck will be here and we'll play games and celebrate what we've learned this year. Preschoolers can drop in and pick up ice cream from 2-3p, 1st-5th graders will enjoy ice cream during the Pop-Up from 3-4p. Sign up on the Events Registration page of our website.

JUSTFAITH:

FAITH AND RACIAL JUSTICE

Zoom meetings have resumed and will continue through Monday, May 24 at 6p. For information, previously registered class members may call Susan McLeod (787-6262).

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

HIKING GROUP

The next hike for the WPC Hiking Group will be Friday, May 14, along the Foothills Trail. This hike will be led by Kathryn Algary. If interested, contact Kathryn at kaalgary@gmail.com.

WESTMINSTER BOOK CLUB

The Westminster Book Club will meet Tuesday, May 4, at 7p in the Green Lot. In the case of rain, we will hold the session in Room 209. Buffie Taylor will lead the discussion of American Dirt by Jeanine Cummins. Join us! New attendees are always welcome.

MEN OF THE CHURCH - SPRING CAMP THORNWELL MISSION

The Spring Men's Mission Trip to Camp Thornwell will be Wednesday, May 12 through Saturday, May 15. Overnight indoor accommodations will be limited according to Covid protocol, so sign ups to reserve beds are required (<https://wpc-online.org/events-registration/mens-mission-trip/>). Camping onsite is also an option. All food will be provided. We will be finishing construction of a cabin structure plus the ever-present landscaping, cleaning, and odd jobs. We have something for all to do whether you come for a day or for one or more nights. Contact Paul O'Neal (paulmoneal@aol.com) with questions.

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 2-9, 2021

Sunday, May 2

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

- 9:00a Online Worship Service
- 10:00 Zoom Sunday Bible Study
Zoom Children's Sunday School
- 11:15 In-Person Worship Service
- 3:00p Zoom Baptism Class
- 5:00 WPCYG Middler Shepherd Groups
- 6:30 WPCYG Senior High Shepherd Groups

Tuesday, May 4

- 12:00p Administrative Committee Meeting
- 7:00 Westminster Book Club in the Green Lot

Wednesday, May 5

- 2-3p Preschool drop in/pick up Ice Cream
- 3-4p It's Elementary Pop Up

Thursday, May 6

- 12:00p Zoom Finance Committee Meeting

Sunday, May 9

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

- 9:00a Online Worship Service
Zoom Witness & Service Committee Meeting
- 10:00 Zoom Sunday Bible Study
Zoom Children's Sunday School
- 11:15 In-Person Worship Service
- 3:00p Confirmation of 2020 & 2021 Confirmation Classes in the Green Lot

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

CHURCH STAFF

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WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

THE SESSION

The Class of 2022

Talitha Allen

Michael Dixon

Sarah Beasley

Ben Edwards

Brian Blount

Ashley Gettys

Scott Clark

Anna Hanor

Brandon Coker

Susan Jones

Bob Dellert

Becky Warth

The Class of 2023

Mary Ashmore

Kevin Lancaster

Tony Atkins

Lisa Mangione

Jeff Beck

Rob Morgan

Emily Busby

Carl Muller

Caroline Clark

Mae Todd Mullins

Durden Collins

Laura Williams Sanders

The Class of 2024

Hastings Blumer

Toni Paylor

Jay Culclasure

Neil Shurley

Ross Glidewell

Keith Stevenson

Jara Jones

Lesley Usher

Meg McKnight

LeAnne White

Kate Weaver Patterson

Russ Williams