

the

HARBINGER

open minds open hearts

VOLUME LXXIV | JUNE 13, 2021 | No. 5

From the Pews, Bill Ballinger

Today's New Testament scripture, Mark 4: 30-32, is part of the "parable of the sower." For context, Jesus is teaching by a lake, but due to the size of the gathering crowd, moved out into the lake on a boat.

"³⁰ He also said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? ³¹ It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; ³² yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade."

A parable is a simple story used to illustrate a moral or spiritual lesson. Through Mark we learn how Jesus sometimes chose to speak to, and teach, his followers. Jesus used parables so that those who were listening could better understand his teachings. Earlier verses in Mark 4 reference the sower sowing seeds on different types of ground or soil, and the seeds ability to take true root and grow. Verses 30-32 speak directly of the seed itself. More specifically, the "mustard seed." In this parable, the sower is God. The mustard seed is God's word and gift of the opportunity to be in His kingdom. The earth, or soil, is us. Many things are 'planted' into our lives. We are the only beings given the free will, or choice, to decide which of these things are nurtured to take root and grow in our lives. Too many times God's intention and God's direction for us, to live and carry out our lives as He intended, is buried under other items. These things and goals become important to us in our lives, and our focus, and carry us farther and farther away from what is truly important.

The past year and a half has been particularly difficult. Sin, temptation, illness and tragedy is everywhere these days. Despite this, there remain 'God moments' throughout each and every day. Looking for and finding these moments to be thankful and grateful for, even the little things, helps keep us connected to God's plan and gifts.

An example of these moments for me was last spring, when I was unable to work due to the pandemic. While I could have focused on the negative, I was provided the truly wonderful gift of time with our (then) 17-month-old son. That type of time will very likely never come again, but I am forever thankful that God provided those special moments with my family.

God wishes to be central in our lives. Constantly being on the lookout for his presence, and his blessings, however small, allows our hearts, minds and souls to be well-prepared to receive riches far greater than anything our minds could possibly comprehend. Amen.

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Sunday, June 13, 2021 | In-Person at 10a | Third Sunday after Pentecost



Preparation for **Worship**

We have indeed been in the counsel of your summoning spirit, and so we know some truth to speak. But we are, as well, filled with rich imagination of our own, and our imagination is sometimes matched and overmatched by our cowardice, by our readiness to please, by our quest for well-being. We are, on most days, a hard mix of true prophet and wayward voice, a mix of your call to justice and our hope for shalom. Here we are, as we are, mixed but faithful, compromised but committed, anxious but devoted to you. Use us and our gifts for your newness that pushes beyond all that we can say or imagine.

from "Called beyond Comfort Zone" by Walter Brueggemann

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 "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing" arr. Bish

Choral Introit "Surely" Langston

* Call to Worship *Psalm 92:1-2, 4*

Leader: It is good to give thanks to the Lord,
People: **to sing praises to your name, O Most High;**
to declare your steadfast love in the morning,
and your faithfulness by night...
Leader: For you, O Lord, have made me glad by your work;
People: **at the works of your hands I sing for joy.**
All: **Let us worship God!**

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

* Prayer of Confession

**God of power and grace, you call us to imagine a world of abundance,
but we so often see through a lens of scarcity.**

**You call us to work toward an age when all will be fed and dignified,
but we assume someone else will act.**

**You call us to bring liberty to the oppressed,
but we remain encumbered by distance, judgment, and greed.**

Forgive us, O Lord, and turn us toward your will.

**Guide us, by your Spirit,
to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with you
so that all may truly prosper and know your everlasting peace.**

In 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 (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.***

The Sacrament of Baptism

Brody Hart Jackson

Hearing **God's Word**

Prayer for Illumination

Gospel Lesson, *Mark 4:30-32*

Old Testament Lesson, *Ezekiel 17:22-24*

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

"God's Great Big Upside-Down World"

Anthem

"The Kingdom"

Thomas

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

* 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.**

Offering

Offertory

"Fairest Lord Jesus"

arr. Smith

* 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

* Charge and Benediction

* Choral Response

"God Be with You"

Vaughan Williams

* Postlude

Trumpet in Dialogue

Clerambault

**All who are able may stand*

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Leading Worship **this Morning**

Julia Watkins, *preaching*

Lauren Slingerland, *liturgist*

Mary Ashmore, *sponsor*

Nancy Smith, *organist/pianist*

Sanctuary Choir Ensemble

Ross Glidewell, *head usher*

Brandon Coker, Kevin Lancaster, *greeters*

Join Us in Welcoming

BAPTISM

This morning we welcome into our fellowship *Brody Hart Jackson*, son of Matt & Lindsay Jackson.

With Thanksgiving We Celebrate

BIRTH

The birth of a son, *Rivers Timothy Houlihan*, to Shawn & Holly Lindler Houlihan on April 13, 2021.

In Memoriam

Edward B. Jones

(9/6/1927 – 5/29/2021)

“I am the resurrection and the life.” – John 11:25

We Remember in Prayer

The family of Ed Jones.

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

OPEN HEARTS • Gathering@WPC

SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

On Sunday, May 30, we began our summer schedule. We will live stream our services now at 10:00a. Please note the following changes:

- Our nursery has reopened.
- We will gradually introduce congregational singing back into our liturgy.
- We will have donuts and coffee following worship.

OPEN MINDS • Education@WPC

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

REGISTER NOW! | AUGUST 2 - 6

RIISING KINDERGARTNERS TO RIISING FIFTH GRADERS

Mark your calendars and join us for the 2021 Westminster Presbyterian Church Vacation Bible School - Compassion Camp: Changing the World with Lovingkindness!

Children will spend the week exploring what it means to have compassion for others, ourselves and the world.

This year's VBS will be in-person, with groups gathering both inside and outside.

Registration opened June 6. Register online at vbspro.events/p/2021wpc.

VBS needs volunteers! Please join us for a fun and fulfilling week with many volunteer opportunities! If you are interested in helping with VBS, please contact Rachel Workman (rachelworkman@gmail.com), or Lindsey Donlan (lindsey.donlan@gmail.com).

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

JUSTFAITH:

Sacred Air will be the next JustFaith program focus beginning in September. It will address climate change and energy through the lenses of faith, science, and environmental justice. Readings from Pope Francis, Hope Jahren, and others will help to guide this nine-week program. Stay tuned for dates/times of meetings. For more information, contact Meg McKnight (670-5078) or Bill Holt (982-3368).

WOMEN OF WESTMINSTER SCHOLARSHIP

Each year Women of Westminster offers scholarships to provide financial aid among college and graduate student membership. Any Westminster member who will be furthering their education in the fall is eligible to apply. Applications are available from the church office or online at www.wpc-online.org. Applicants may contact Coleman Dixon (colemandixon@hotmail.com) with any questions. The deadline is Friday, June 18, 2021.

THEOLOGY READING GROUP

The Theology Reading Group will gather on Monday, June 21, at 7p in the Green Lot. This will provide a time for talking with friends and a chance to consider options regarding reopening in the fall. All are welcome to attend.

OPEN HEARTS •Mission@WPC

BECOME A PENPAL

You are invited to connect with and encourage a woman in prison by serving as a pen pal. Through Westminster's partnership with Soteria, a local agency that empowers people who have been impacted by incarceration, pen pals will exchange letters with women who are scheduled for release and reentry into society. Contact Associate Pastor Julia Watkins to learn more and to get involved.

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

We take this opportunity to extend congratulations to the young people of Westminster Presbyterian Church who are completing high school, college, or graduate school. We offer them our best wishes as they move into new phases of their lives.

2021 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

Greenville High School

Hughes Clark

Logan Leonard

Wiley Phillips

Davis Usher

J.L. Mann High School

Kayla Burrell

Caroline Eades

James Moon

Sutton Vanderbloemen

Christ Church Episcopal High School

Brooks O'Hanlan

Mac Ridgeway

2021 COLLEGE GRADUATES

Clemson University

Edward Pollock

Savannah College of Art & Design

Martha McLeod

University of Mississippi

Fletcher Williams

University of South Carolina

Grant Hall

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June 13 – 20, 2021

Sunday, June 13

3rd SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

10:00a Worship Service

11:00 Fellowship with donuts

Wednesday, June 16

6:30p Waffle Cone Wednesday for Middler Group

7:30p Waffle Cone Wednesday for Senior High Group

Thursday, June 17

12:30p Finance Committee Meeting

Sunday, June 20

4th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

10:00a Worship Service

11:00 Fellowship with donuts

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

CHURCH STAFF

Ben Dorr
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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