



First Sunday after Christmas Day

Preparation for **Worship**

"Behind all our fun and games at Christmastime, we should not try to escape a sense of awe, almost a sense of fright, at what God has done...We shall be celebrating no beautiful myth, no lovely piece of traditional folklore, but a solemn fact. God has been here once historically, but, as millions will testify, God will come again with the same silence and the same devastating humility into any human heart ready to receive him." – J.B. Phillips, "The Christian Year" from *Good News: Thoughts on God and Man*

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 "Away in a Manger" arr. Forrest

* Call to Worship

Leader: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.
People: **Glory to God in the highest!**
Leader: For a child has been born for us, a Son has been given to us.
People: **Glory to God in the highest!**
Leader: He is Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
People: **Glory to God in the highest!**
Leader: To us is born in the city of David a Savior, the Messiah, the Lord.
People: **Glory to God in the highest!**
Leader: And the Word became flesh and lived among us.
All: **Glory to God in the highest!**
Let us worship God!

* Hymn of Praise No. 119 "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" MENDELSSOHN

* Prayer of Confession

Holy and lowly God, you are ushering in a new era of hope, love, joy, and peace. We confess that we have often received this new era as an unwelcome interruption. We have settled into safe routines, rather than remaining open to change. We have harbored resentment, rather than working to forgive. We have resigned ourselves to injustice, rather than believing in a better way. By your mercy, forgive us, and ready us to join in the work of Jesus Christ, who is born to us this day and forevermore. 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 *Robert Malcolm Turner*

Congregational Response "Baptized in Water" Bunesan

Bap - tized in wa - ter, sealed by the Spir - it, marked with the sign of Christ our King; born of the Spir - it, we are God's chil - dren; joy - ful - ly now God's prais - es we sing.

Hearing **God's Word**

Prayer for Illumination

Epistle Lesson, *Colossians 3:12-17* p. 958

Gospel Lesson, *Luke 2:41-52* p. 833

Leader: The Word of the Lord.
People: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon "Pardon the Interruption"

* Hymn No. 110 "Love Has Come" BRING A TORCH

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.

Offering "Ukrainian Bell Carol" arr. Winston

* 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. 136 "Go, Tell It on the Mountain" GO TELL IT

* Charge and Benediction

* Postlude "Angels We Have Heard on High" arr. McDonald

**All who are able may stand*

Leading Worship **this Morning**

Julia Watkins, *preaching*
 Amos Workman, *liturgist*
 Michael Dixon, *sponsor*
 Lynne Robinson, *pianist*
 Jill McCreight, *lay reader*
 Ben Craddock, *head usher*
 Mary Ashmore, Emily Busby, Carl Muller,
 Laura Williams Sanders, Becky Warth, *greeters*
 Caroline Dixon, *acolyte*

WORSHIP NOTES

NURSERY

Childcare is available for infants through four-year kindergarten. Our nurturing staff of experienced caregivers and parent volunteers offers a welcoming environment to all children.

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.

We Remember in Prayer

John Orders on the death of his mother, Betty Orders, in Greenville - 12/14/2021.

Join Us in Welcoming

BAPTISM

We welcome *Robert Malcolm Turner*, son of Chase and Alex Turner, this morning.

With Thanksgiving We Celebrate BIRTHS

The birth of a son, *James Tucker Wolcott*, to Jayson and Meg Wolcott on Sunday, December 12, 2021.

The birth of a son, *William Estifan Allendorf*, to Tucker and Jessica Allendorf on Tuesday, December 14, 2021.

2022 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

As of Monday, December 20, we have received \$2,146,197 in pledges toward our 2022 budget goal of \$2,520,968.

For your convenience, you may pledge via our website at wpc-online.org/pledge-today, you may mail in your pledge, or send your pledge by email to the Church Financial Secretary, Sherri Owens, at sherri@wpc-online.org.

HIKING GROUP

The Hiking Group will meet at the Table Rock Nature Center on Tuesday, December 28. Contact Hike Leader Ralph Bouton (ralphbouton@yahoo.com) for additional information and to sign up for this hike.

WPC BOOK CLUB:

The Westminster Book Club will meet Tuesday, January 4, at 7p at the church in Room 209. Ellen Stevenson will lead the discussion of *Final Revival of Opal & Nev* by Dawnie Walton. The author will be answering submitted questions on a prerecorded video. Join us! New attendees are always welcome.

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.

FILL THE FOOD PANTRY

In this season of abundance, practice generosity by donating the following items to the United Ministries food pantry: canned fruit and vegetables, soups, pastas, canned meat, peanut butter, and powdered milk. Items may be left in the marked wall cabinets in the Friendship Court.

RETIREMENT GIVING

For those 70 and 1/2 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
2021 BUDGET UPDATE

2021 Pledges	\$2,329,470
Amount Received	\$2,003,890
Pledges Outstanding	(\$325,580)

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 2021 statement in by December 31, 2021. By fulfilling your pledge, you enable us to keep faith with our mission partners. Thank you.

WOMEN OF WESTMINSTER
WOMEN'S RETREAT

All women are invited
to join
Women of Westminster
at Montreat
for their annual retreat.

February, 25-27, 2022

Register online at www.wpc-online.org

THE HARBINGER

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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.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December 26, 2021 -
January 2, 2022

Sunday, December 26

First Sunday after Christmas Day

11:15a Worship Service
12:15p Fellowship Time

Monday, December 27

Church Office Closed

Tuesday, December 28

Hiking Group at Table Rock
12:00p Al-Anon Group Meeting

Wednesday, December 29

2:00p Youth Open Gym

Sunday, January 2

Second Sunday after Christmas Day

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

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CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The Session has called the annual meeting of the congregation for Sunday, January 9, 2022, immediately following the 11:15a worship service.

The purpose of the meeting is threefold:

- a) To vote on the proposed terms of call for 2022 for our pastoral staff;
- b) To receive the 2022 operating budget;
- c) To elect 12 elders (Class of 2025) to the Session and 1 trustee.

The proposed slate being presented by the Nominating Committee is as follows:

Elders: Jacob Barker, Marian Carpenter, Lindsey Donlan, Carroll Farmer, Zach Freeman, Susan Grier, Nikki Grumbine, Bill Holt, Ginny Reed, Jordan Smith, Tom Vanderbloemen, Parks Workman

Trustee: Sue Inman, Class of 2027

the
HARBINGER
open minds open hearts

VOLUME LXXIV | December 26, 2021 | No. 34

From the Pews, Brandon Coker

Kevin!!! I'm sure most everyone has either watched or at least viewed clips of the "Home Alone" movie scene where the mother of a young boy, yells, "Kevin!", after realizing she has left her son at home while in route on a family trip out of town for the Christmas holiday. Prior to starting my own family, I would watch "Home Alone" and think, this is a bit of a "stretch" right. What mother and father would actually take a trip, out of town no less, without one of their kids. Fast forward to me now, living with all the chaos that comes with having a family with three kids, and yeah...not so much of a "stretch" movie scene anymore for me!

Our scripture reading for today is the story of a young, 12 year old, Jesus going to Jerusalem for the Festival of the Passover with his parents, family and family friends. Mary and Joseph, along with their relatives and friends, return home after the festival, but forget to check that Jesus is with them. We can see this right, you're with your extended family and friends at a celebration and assume that one of your kids is in the group. Mary and Joseph return home and I'm guessing have their "Kevin!" moment of panic that their son is not with them. Jesus had stayed in the temple courts listening and asking questions of the teachers and rabbis.

I read this scripture much more now from a parent point of view. I imagine Mary and Joseph being very upset and relieved when they find Jesus, as any parent would be, and not grasping why Jesus, at the age of twelve, would be in the temple courts having these discussions with adult teachers. I'm guessing the feelings of relief, and frustration, at some point transitioned to an understanding that their son was growing up and realizing who he was.

During the Christmas holiday season, there is often no shortage of activities, events, and celebrations with friends and family. Hopefully, Laura and I do not leave our kids behind anywhere! I also do not want us to have a "Kevin!" moment, and forget to spend time in reflection on why we are celebrating Christmas.

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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