



Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

Preparation for **Worship**

Fill us with your holy love, O Lord, and open the treasures of your wisdom to us. You alone know all that we desire. So perfect what you have begun in us, and answer the prayers you instill in us through the stirring of your Holy Spirit. Even as we seek your face, turn to us and show us your glory. Then our longing will be satisfied, and our peace will be complete. Amen.

Augustine of Hippo

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 *Holy, Holy, Holy* arr. Forrest

* Call to Worship Psalm 50:1-6

Leader: The mighty one, God the Lord, speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting.

People: **Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God shines forth.**

Leader: Our God comes and does not keep silence. God calls to the heavens above and to the earth: "Gather to me my faithful ones."

People: **The heavens declare God's righteousness, for God himself is judge.**

All: **Let us worship God!**

* Hymn #13 "The Mighty God with Power Speaks" KINGSFOLD

* Prayer of Confession

Good and gracious God, search for us high and low, near and far, for we are lost.

We have wandered from Christ's path, choosing distractions over discipleship, prioritizing possessions over people, striving for wealth and security instead of working for justice and peace.

Forgive us, and find us once again.

Bring us back to our true selves, so that we would be the children you created us to be: joyful in our obedience, persistent in our prayers, extravagant with our gifts, and unconditional with our love.

We ask it all in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

* Assurance of Pardon

Leader: Friends, believe the good news of the gospel.

People: **In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.**

* Gloria Patri Hymnal, #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 are invited to leave for Children's Church.

Hearing **God's Word**

Prayer for Illumination

Old Testament Lesson, *Genesis 6:11-14, 18-22*

p. 5

Gospel Lesson, *Luke 12:35-40*

p. 847

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

"God's Divine Thief"

Responding to **God's Word**

* Affirmation of Faith

from *A Brief Statement of Faith*

We trust in God the Holy Spirit, everywhere the giver and renewer of life.

The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith, sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor, and binds us together with all believers in the one body of Christ, the Church.

In a broken and fearful world, the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.

In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks

and to live holy and joyful lives, even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth, praying, "Come, Lord Jesus!"

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

Anthem *Create In Me* Johnson

* Doxology Hymnal, #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 #175 "Seek Ye First" LAFFERTY

* Charge and Benediction

* Congregational Response Hymnal, #740

Lead me, guide me, along the way, for if you lead me, I cannot stray. Lord, let me walk each day with thee. Lead me, O Lord, lead me.

* Postlude *He Is Exalted* Paris

**All who are able may stand*

Leading Worship **this Morning**

Ben Dorr, *preaching*

Julia Watkins, *liturgist*

Sam White, Jr, *lay reader*

Nancy Smith, *guest organist*

The Summer Choir

Jacob Barker, *head usher*

Jay Culclasure, Jara Jones, Laura Williams Sanders,

Kevin Lancaster, Lisa Mangione, *greeters*

Milo Fowler, *acolyte*

Worship Notes

NURSERY

Childcare is available for infants through 4K. Our nurturing staff of experienced caregivers and parent volunteers offers a welcoming environment for children. The Nursery is located on the mezzanine level. The entrance is at Westminster Drive, at the columbarium or near the Westminster Weekday School offices.

WORSHIP BAGS

Each Sunday we offer worship bags in the atrium for children. The worship bags are designed to include reusable items that engage children in open ended play during worship. While children attend worship with their families, they can participate in worship and play to make foundational layers of meaning for faith. Please return the zipper bag and its contents each Sunday. This shift to reusable items demonstrates how we value hospitality and care for creation.

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

Brian Blount on the death of his mother, Helen Blount, in Winston-Salem, NC - 7/29/2022.

OPEN HEARTS • Gathering@WPC

BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS

Children are invited to bring their backpack for a blessing Sunday, August 14, at 9:30a in the Sanctuary Atrium. Along with prayers for a year of learning and growing, they'll receive a backpack tag to remind them of God's love through the school year. Join us as we celebrate and pray for a new school year!

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.

Save the Dates!

RISE AGAINST HUNGER

Celebrate WPC's 75th Anniversary by packaging 75,000 meals with Rise Against Hunger. Everyone (ages 8+) is welcome to join in this fun service opportunity in the Fellowship Hall on Saturday, August 20, with 2-hour shifts from 8a-4p. Childcare is available from 10a-12p for ages birth-4K. Register now on the WPC website, or write "Rise Against Hunger" on your Connection Card to get involved.

75TH GALA

To register for the September 22nd Gala at the Poinsett Club, see the link in the e-News and on the church website at www.wpc-online.org. Or, you may call the church office.

OPEN MINDS • Serving with WPC

PROJECT HOST SOUP KITCHEN

Volunteer with Project Host soup kitchen, which serves some of our most vulnerable neighbors. The next available dates are September 13 and 27 (9a-1p). Sign up at www.wpc-online.org or write "Project Host" on your Connection Card.

INTERFAITH HOSPITALITY NETWORK UPDATE

After careful consideration, United Ministries has developed a new IHN model that will both support the ongoing mission to provide emergency shelter to families with children and engage congregational partners in that work. Whereas congregations have traditionally hosted families, they will now be housed in former Greenville Tech student housing units. This model will allow for even more families to be served in a more stable setting. Thank you to all who have participated in the Interfaith Hospitality Network across the years! Be on the lookout for new ways to serve families soon.

PLEASANT VALLEY CONNECTION HOMEWORK HELPERS

WPC is seeking volunteers to serve one-on-one with elementary students in PVC's after-school program. You'll be building a relationship, helping with homework, and practicing basic reading and math skills to set children up for success. Volunteers (ages 16+) will serve on a weekly basis for up to 1 hour. To get involved, contact Anna Hanor (anna.hanor@gmail.com) or write "PVC" on your Connection Card.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

ABRAHAM BUILD

Throughout the fall, Westminster is partnering with Habitat for Humanity in an exciting new way! We will participate alongside other Christian, Jewish, and Muslim congregations in an Abraham Build, named for the three faith traditions that count Abraham among their ancestors. Together, we will build a home in the historic Nicholatown community, while also building relationships with one another and our neighbors of diverse faith backgrounds. Sign up at www.wpc-online.org or contact Tony Atkins (tony@indconinc.com) to get involved.

Gathering@WPC

CHILI COOK-OFF!

Calling all Chili contestants! Please contact Coleman Dixon at 864-607-8778 or colemandixon@hotmail.com if you're interested in participating and seeing if your chili is a winner! Mark your calendars for the churchwide chili cook-off on October 2 after worship in the Fellowship Hall brought to you by the church and the Women of Westminster.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcomed the following new members into our fellowship on Sunday, July 31, 2022:
 • David & Julie Suggs joined by reaffirmation of faith.

HYMNS FOR ONLINE WORSHIP

To access hymns for livestream worship, click the Harbinger link on the Livestream Worship webpage.

[f](#) [t](#) [@](#) [v](#) [wpcgreenville](#) | wpc-online.org | 2310 Augusta St.

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.

Church Staff

Ben Dorr
 Pastor & Head of Staff
bdorr@wpc-online.org

Leigh Stuckey
 Associate Pastor
lstuckey@wpc-online.org

Mary Kathleen Duncan
 Associate Pastor
mkduncan@wpc-online.org

Lauren Slingerland
 Associate Pastor
lslingerland@wpc-online.org

Julia Watkins
 Associate Pastor
jwatkins@wpc-online.org

Amos Workman
 Parish Associate
aworkman@wpc-online.org

Rosemary Hughes
 Interim Director of Music
rhughes@wpc-online.org

Lauren Hood
 Associate Director of Youth Ministry
lhood@wpc-online.org

Kathryn Knauer
 Children's Choir Coordinator
knauer@wpc-online.org

Todd Monsell
 Organist
tmonsell@wpc-online.org

Cara Puntch
 Weekday School Director
cpuntch@wpc-online.org

Michelle Little
 Office Manager
michelle@wpc-online.org

Wendy Bagley
 Secretary
wendy@wpc-online.org

Pam Schook
 Financial Secretary
pschook@wpc-online.org

Aly Friend
 Director of Nurseries
alyfriend@wpc-online.org

Steve Phillips
 Building Supervisor
sphillips@wpc-online.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August 7 - 14, 2022

Sunday, August 7

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost
 9:00a Membership Committee Meeting
 9:40 Sunday Session Meeting
 10:00 Worship Service
 11:00 After Worship Fellowship with donuts

Monday, August 8

7:00p Music Director Search Committee Meeting

Tuesday, August 9

8:00a Project Host
 12:00p Al-Anon Group Meeting

Wednesday, August 10

Youth "Move Up" Day
 5:30 Middler Waffle Cone
 Wednesday at Spill the Beans
 7:00 Senior High Dinner Club

Thursday, August 11

12:00p Finance Committee Meeting (Zoom)

Sunday, August 14

Tenth Sunday after Pentecost
 9:00a Witness & Service Committee Meeting
 9:30 Blessing of the Backpacks
 9:40 Sunday Session Meeting
 10:00 Worship Service
 11:00 After Worship Fellowship with donuts
 11:30 Visitation Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon
 5:00p WoW Board Meeting

WOMEN OF WESTMINSTER

The Women of Westminster's Kick Off Social will be Thursday, August 25 at 6:30p at the home of Mandy Pruitt (29 Rock Creek Dr., 29605). All women from the church are invited to socialize, have fellowship with one another, meet new folks and learn more about WOW! Please contact Coleman Dixon, Moderator, at 864-607-8778 or colemandixon@hotmail.com to be added to our email list to get more information. Looking forward to a meaningful year!

the **HARBINGER**
open minds open hearts

VOLUME LXXV | August 7, 2022 | No. 14

From the Pews, Neil Shurley

You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.

"Can we have Rapture practice again?"

This was my first visit to Sunday night "rap group," a gathering of maybe a dozen fellow high schoolers. Each week we did some bible study, sang/chanted a couple of songs (the only reason I know "first John four seven and eight"), prayed, and talked a little bit about our week. As someone who did not really grow up going to church, and, on top of that, had moved A LOT while growing up, it was an interesting and fun way to spend some time getting to know more about the bible and about my friends. I imagine it's what a church youth group is like, but since I never experienced that, I don't know if it's a true comparison. I'm glad my kids have been able to experience actual church youth group here at Westminster.

Rap group was held in the home of a youngish couple (who seemed old to me but looking back they were probably late 20s) named Bob and Alice. Well, that's what I thought their names were when I got introduced to them that first evening. Turns out they were actually named Barb and Ellis. Who knew?

Also turns out they were premillennial dispensationalists. Not that I would have known those words back then, but it's a term I learned from Barbara Stoop during one of her adult Sunday school classes here at Westminster. Essentially, it's the end times doctrine proclaiming that "saved" Christians will rise into the air to meet Jesus and then vanish to heaven. This event would initiate the trials and tribulations the remaining residents of earth would suffer before Jesus' eventual second coming - it's the event that opens the Left Behind series. This being the early 1980s, those books did not yet exist and I had frankly never heard of a Rapture or any of the other "end times" stories. (By the way, most of those things were essentially invented by a guy named John Nelson Darby in 1833 out of a few verses in Daniel and Revelation, so, you know, I wouldn't worry too much about learning the details. Then again, I haven't yet heard today's sermon, so...)

"Rapture practice" was something the kids and leaders had done at a rap group meeting a few weeks before. Basically, they leaped up and down many times, right there in Bob and Alice, er, Barb and Ellis' living room, laughing more and more as it went on, "practicing" for that mysterious day when they would rise into the air and be raptured into heaven. Another week, Barb demonstrated to us how she could sometimes speak in "tongues." All in all, not exactly the same experience I've had attending PCUSA churches over the past 30 years. And quite the eye-opening experience for a kid whose primary church memories involved making a clay pig during Sunday school when I was in second grade.

Looking back, I am grateful to Barb and Ellis and all my friends, and for rap group. As someone who liked to read Isaac Asimov's essay collections about physics more than the bible, I never bought into their "Jesus is coming back ANY SECOND NOW and we have to be ready!" mentality. And as time went on, it was easy for me to roll my eyes at the many imminent end times predictions made on billboards and by various talking (and shouting) heads on TV. I'm still too much of a rationalist, I guess, and my two decades(!) here at Westminster have taught me that it's okay to ask questions. It's important, in fact, to LIVE those questions.

But sometimes I do still practice jumping in the air. Doesn't hurt to be ready.

celebrating westminster 

August 20th | Rise Against Hunger
 8a-4p (sign up for a two hour shift)
 Package 75,000 meals to celebrate 75 years of service.

September 22nd | 75th Gala
 7p-10p at the Poinsett Club
 \$75 | heavy hors d'oeuvres, beer and wine, live music

