



Christmas Day

Preparation for **Worship**

God Most High, your only Son embraced the weakness of flesh, to give us power to become your children; your eternal Word chose a dwelling among us, that we might live in your presence. Grant us a spirit of wisdom to know how rich is the glory you have made our own, and how great the hope to which we are called in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, in the splendor of eternal light, one God forever and ever. 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 *Of the Father's Love Begotten* Hayes

* Call to Worship *Hebrews 1:1-13*

Leader: Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets.
People: But in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things.

Leader: He is the reflection of God's very being.
People: And he sustains all things by his powerful word.
All: Let us worship God!

* Hymn #132 *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice* IN DULCI JUBILO

* Prayer of Confession

Gracious God,
you have come to us in joy through the birth of your Son,
fulfilling the promises you made long ago.
Yet we have responded to your grace with fear,
to your love with apathy, and to your truth with self-deception.
We do not trust the good news to be good,
nor do we want to be changed by that news.
Forgive us, Holy One,
and renew our spirits and souls on this glorious day.
Give us hearts that will rejoice at your abundant mercy,
and minds that will be wise with your eternal Word.
Move us to the fringes, O God,
so that none of your children will be forgotten,
and all of our neighbors will know your love.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord, we pray. Amen.

* Assurance of Pardon

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

* Gloria Patri #581 GLORIA PATRI

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.

Hearing **God's Word**

Prayer for Illumination
 Old Testament Lesson, *Isaiah 52:7-10* p. 596
 Gospel Lesson, *John 1:1-14* p. 862

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

Homily *"Christmas in the Parking Lot"*
 * Hymn #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

* Anthem *All is Well* arr. Larson

* Doxology #606 OLD HUNDRETH

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 #136 *Go, Tell It on the Mountain* Go TELL IT

* Charge and Benediction

* Postlude *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice* Bedford
(In Dulci Jubilo)

*All who are able may stand

Leading Worship **this Morning**

Ben Dorr, *preaching*
 Amos Workman, *liturgist*
 Todd Monsell, *pianist, organist, & soloist*
 Rosemary Hughes, *pianist*
 Jeff Reynolds, *head usher*
 Lisa Mangione, Marian Carpenter, Carl Muller,
 Toni Paylor, Laura Williams Sanders, *greeters*
 Ellen Reynolds, *acolyte*

WORSHIP NOTES

NURSERY

We will not have a nursery on Sundays, December 25 and January 1.

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.

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

The Church Office will be closed Monday, December 26, and Tuesday, December 27.

In Memoriam

Nancy Billings
 (10/14/1942 - 12/13/2022)

Jim Glidewell
 (7/1/1945 - 12/21/2022)

*"I am the resurrection and the life."
 - John 11:25*

With Thanksgiving We Celebrate

BIRTHS

The birth of a daughter, *Wesley Ellen Faulk*, to Daniel & Rebecca Faulk on Thursday, December 15, 2022.

The birth of a daughter, *Charlotte Laura Powell*, to Michael & Kaley Powell on Friday, December 16, 2022.

Heritage Lecture Speaker@WPC

Announcing the 2022 Heritage Lecturer: Kate Bowler. Join us on Thursday, January 19 at 7p. Bowler is the author of *Blessed: A History of the American Prosperity Gospel, Everything Happens for a Reason: And Other Lies I've Loved, No Cure for Being Human (And Other Truths I Need to Hear), Good Enough: 40ish Devotionals for a Life of Imperfection, and The Lives We Actually Have: 100 Blessings for Imperfect Days* (forthcoming). Dr. Bowler will speak in the Sanctuary from 7p-8:30p. Further details forthcoming.

Opportunities@WPC

HIKING GROUP

The Hiking Group's next hike will be Friday, December 30, at Table Rock Mountain. If you would like to attend or have questions regarding this hike, contact group leader, Durden Collins, at durden.collins@gmail.com.

LIGHTLY SEASONED GROUP

The Winter 2023 Lightly Seasoned Fellowship gathering has been scheduled for Saturday, January 28, at 6:30p at the home of Pam & Doug Evans (315 W. Faris Rd.).

PROJECT HOST SOUP KITCHEN

Serve with Project Host in 2023! Dates are now available for the New Year - every other Tuesday from 9a-1p. Sign up to serve online at www.wpc-online.org/connect/eventsregistration.

WOMEN OF WESTMINSTER

UPCOMING EVENTS

3rd Annual Churchwide Chili Cook-Off!

Mark your calendars for the churchwide chili cook-off on Sunday, January 22, after worship in the Fellowship Hall. Eleven teams will be fighting for the top chili spot. Come taste all of the chili and vote for your favorites from traditional beef recipes, to vegetarian options, to chicken chili, and also spicy! Sign up online now for taste cards, raffle tickets for great prizes, and a potato bar with salad lunch.

Women of Westminster Retreat - February 24 - 26, 2023 at Montreat Conference Center

The Women of Westminster Retreat is a time to unwind, experience peace and relax. The immediate calm and serenity as you come into Montreat is apparent. It's truly beautiful. At the Westminster Women's Retreat, our hope is that you experience God in a new and powerful way; learn something new about yourself through the messages brought to us by our speaker, Reverend Anne Apple; meet new friends; grow relationships; and have a getaway weekend for yourself. Please join us for a weekend of devotions, fellowship, music and fun. Sign up now through January 20, 2023 via the WPC homepage. Single rooms are first come, first serve and fill up! Join up with a friend(s) to get a double or quad room! Contact the church office or Coleman Dixon, Moderator, with any questions.

Giving@WPC

**FINANCIAL MINISTRY
2022 BUDGET UPDATE**

2022 Pledges	\$2,352,797
Amount Received	\$2,094,570
Pledges Outstanding	(\$258,227)

Our auditing firm has informed us that we must close our books on December 30. Please have any contributions you wish to show on your 2022 statement in by December 30, 2022. By fulfilling your pledge, you enable us to keep faith with our mission partners. Thank you.

RETIREMENT GIVING

Make Qualified Distributions from your IRAs: Westminster members age 70.5 and older can support the church with a gift from their Individual Retirement Account. Qualified charitable distributions from IRAs may offer tax advantages while benefiting WPC's local and global ministries. Contact the church office for more information.

THE HARBINGER

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December 25, 2022 - January 1, 2023

Sunday, December 25

Christmas Day

11:15a	Worship Service
12:00p	Cookie Reception

Monday, December 26

Weekday School Closed

Church Office Closed

8:00p	Narcotics Anonymous
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Tuesday, December 27

Weekday School Closed

Church Office Closed

Wednesday, December 28

Weekday School Closed

Thursday, December 29

Weekday School Closed

8:00p	Narcotics Anonymous
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Friday, December 30

Weekday School Closed

Hiking Group Outing

Sunday, January 1

First Sunday after Christmas

11:15a	Worship Service
12:00p	Cookie Reception

THE SESSION

The Class of 2023

<i>Mary Ashmore</i>	<i>Kevin Lancaster</i>
<i>Tony Atkins</i>	<i>Lisa Mangione</i>
<i>Jeff Beck</i>	<i>Rob Morgan</i>
<i>Emily Busby</i>	<i>Carl Muller</i>
<i>Caroline Clark</i>	<i>Mae Todd Mullins</i>
<i>Durden Collins</i>	<i>Laura Williams Sanders</i>

The Class of 2024

<i>Hastings Blumer</i>	<i>Toni Paylor</i>
<i>Laura Cox</i>	<i>Neil Shurley</i>
<i>Jay Culclasure</i>	<i>Keith Stevenson</i>
<i>Ross Glidewell</i>	<i>Lesley Usher</i>
<i>Jara Jones</i>	<i>LeAnne White</i>
<i>Meg McKnight</i>	<i>Russ Williams</i>

The Class of 2025

<i>Jacob Barker</i>	<i>Nikki Grumbine</i>
<i>Marian Carpenter</i>	<i>Bill Holt</i>
<i>Lindsey Donlan</i>	<i>Ginny Reed</i>
<i>Carroll Farmer</i>	<i>Jordan Smith</i>
<i>Zach Freeman</i>	<i>Tom Vanderbloemen</i>
<i>Susan Grier</i>	<i>Parks Workman</i>

the
HARBINGER
open minds open hearts

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From the Pews, Neil Shurley

*“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.”
John 1:5*

It's the turning point in my favorite childhood Christmas specials. Rudolph lets his nose glow.

The Grinch's eyes widen as the spirit of Christmas enters his heart and he literally lights up with joy.

Linus recites Luke 2: 8-14, inspiring Charlie Brown to see his sad little Christmas tree in a whole new light.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it. With apologies to Linus, that's what Christmas is all about – the true light, which enlightens everyone, came into the world, in the person of Jesus.

This Christmas morning, I intend to focus on the light shining in my own life. The glowing love of family, the sparkle of the Christmas tree, the glint of reflected ceiling light in the carving knife at our dinner table.

There's been plenty of darkness in my life this year, just as I'm sure you endured your own bouts of darkness. For some, the entire holiday season is one of tension and sadness.

Today we celebrate the coming of the light into the world, the true light that shines even in the darkest night. May the love and peace of Christ surround all of us today and in the days and months and years to come. And, as the Reverend Jean Weaver charged us at the end of nearly every Sunday school class she taught, "Be the light."

May the love of God in Christ surround you and even emanate from you as you reflect the glory that is the coming of Jesus into the world. Let your heart glow.