



Third Sunday after Epiphany

Preparation for **Worship**

How great is your love, Lord God, and how wide is your mercy. Never let us board up the narrow gate that leads to life with rules or doctrines that you dismiss. Grant us a spirit that is aligned with your Spirit, so that we may welcome all with affection; so that your church may never exclude anyone, friend or foe; so that the love of Christ would be shared at any cost, even if it means we give our lives in service to your love. 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.**

Minute for Stewardship Steve Johnson

Prelude *As With Gladness Men of Old* Wold

Choral Introit 11:15a *Surely* Langston

\* Call to Worship Psalm 139

Leader: O Lord, you have searched me and known me.  
**People: You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away.**  
 Leader: You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me.  
**People: Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it.**  
**All: Let us worship God!**

\* Hymn #353 *My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less* Solid Rock

\* Prayer of Confession

**Gracious and holy God, remind us once again how much we depend on you. We have been lost in our fears and worries, hesitant to step forward in faith. We have relied on money, status, and power to get our way, instead of discerning your will and following your path. We have failed to be an obedient church, choosing comfort and control instead of the cross of Jesus Christ. Forgive us, O Lord, and let your love overwhelm us. Open our eyes to the new life that you have offered us. Open our hearts to the new people you are bringing to us. Open our minds so that we might become the new community that you are calling us to be. In Christ's name 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.**

11:15a Children in K5 - first grade are invited to leave for Children's Church.

Hearing **God's Word**

Prayer for Illumination

Epistle Lesson, *Galatians 1:11-17* p. 945

New Testament Lesson, *Acts 9:1-19a* p. 893

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

Sermon "It Wasn't His Idea"

Responding to **God's Word**

\* Affirmation of Faith *The Confession of 1967*

**God's sovereign love is a mystery beyond the reach of the human mind. Human thought ascribes to God superlatives of power, wisdom, and goodness.**

**But God reveals divine love in Jesus Christ by showing power in the form of a servant, wisdom in the folly of the cross, and goodness in receiving sinful men and women.**

**The power of God's love in Christ to transform the world discloses that the Redeemer is the Lord and Creator who made all things to serve the purpose of God's love.**

Choral Call to Prayer 11:15a *Lord Jesus Christ* Berthier

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 *Be Thou My Vision* arr. Sorenson

\* 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 #816 WER NUR DEN LIEBEN GOTT

*If Thou but Trust in God to Guide Thee*

\* Charge and Benediction

\* Choral Response 11:15a *Lead Me, Guide Me* arr. Smallwood

\* Postlude *The Acts of God are Righteous* Walther

\*All who are able may stand

Leading Worship **this Morning**

Ben Dorr, *preaching*

Julia Watkins, *liturgist*

Lee Freeman (9a), Alissa Edwards (11:15a), *lay readers*

Todd Monsell, *organist and pianist*

The Sanctuary Choir Ensemble (9a)

The Sanctuary Choir (11:15a)

Jacob Barker (9a), Ben Edwards (11:15a), *head ushers*

Kevin Lancaster, Lisa Mangione, Zach Freeman,

Carl Muller, Mae Todd Mullins (9a), *greeters*

Mary Ashmore, Tony Atkins, Jeff Beck,

Emily Busby, Caroline Clark (11:15a), *greeters*

Lillian Threatt, Miles Threatt (9a), *acolytes*

Elizabeth Workman, Mary Wayne Workman (11:15a), *acolytes*

**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.

**CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

The Session has called the annual meeting of the congregation for Sunday, January 29, 2023, immediately following the 11:15a worship service.

The purpose of the meeting is threefold:

- a) To vote on the proposed terms of call for 2023 for our pastoral staff;
- b) To hear the report of the Finance Committee;
- c) To elect 12 elders (Class of 2026) to the Session.

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

Elders:	Emily Cole	Walker Miller
	Ingrid Erwin	Stan Pendergrass
	Roger Gower	Betsy Raines
	Amy Hawkins	Jeff Reynolds
	Anne Howson	Susan Robbins
	George McLarty	Zach Weaver

**Opportunities@WPC**

**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.).

**OUTREACH NEWSLETTER**

Interested in learning more about Westminster's ministries of witness and service? Sign up for Outreach @ WPC and receive bi-weekly updates in your email inbox. Sign up on WPC's website or contact Wendy Bagley.

**PURCHASE CAFÉ JUSTO COFFEE**

Did you miss the chance to buy coffee at the Alternative Gift Market? A limited quantity is still available to purchase and pick up from WPC's front office for \$6/bag (<https://wpc-online.org/just-coffee/>).

**MEN OF WESTMINSTER**

Men of Westminster will meet at 6p on Thursday, January 26, at Blockhouse (1619 Augusta St., 29605). All men are invited to attend. No RSVP needed.

**HIKING GROUP**

The Hiking Group will meet again on Friday, January 27, to hike in Table Rock State Park. Contact Hike Leaders: Donn James (donnandsalliejames@gmail.com) or Ralph Bouton (ralphbouton@yahoo.com) if interested.

**OPEN MINDS • Education@WPC**

**BAPTISM CLASS**

If you would like to have your child baptized at Westminster, our next Baptism class is scheduled for Sunday, January 29, at 4:30p. Please notify the church office if you would like to attend, and we will be glad to send you the information for this class.

**JUST ACTION ADVOCACY TRAINING**

Join WPC partners, Mill Village Ministries and Greenville Homeless Alliance, for a 9-session advocacy training based on the JustFaith program. Participants will deepen their understanding of biblical justice and develop an action plan to advocate for a specific issue in the Greenville community. The program begins February 9th, and space is limited. Contact Julia Watkins for more information.

**FILL THE FOOD PANTRY**

In this season of abundance, practice generosity by donating the following items to the United Ministries food pantry:

- canned fruits and vegetables
- soups
- pastas
- canned meats
- peanut butter
- powdered milk

Items may be left in the marked wall cabinets in the Friendship Court.

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**THE HARBINGER**

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**CALENDAR OF EVENTS  
January 22 - 29, 2023**

**Sunday, January 22**  
**Third Sunday after Epiphany**  
9:00a Worship Service  
Education Committee Meeting  
Creation Stewardship Meeting  
10:00 One Adult Sunday School  
Confirmation Class Meeting  
10:55 Sunday Session Meeting  
11:15 Worship Service  
12:30p Women of Westminster  
Chili Cook-Off Event  
4:15 Middler Mission Trip  
Interest Meeting  
4:30 First Steps Music Class  
5:00 Middler Youth Group  
5:15 Senior High Choir Rehearsal  
6:00 Youth Dinner  
6:30 Middler Choir Rehearsal  
Senior High Youth Group

**Monday, January 23**  
8:00 Narcotics Anonymous

**Tuesday, January 24**  
12:00p Al-Anon  
7:00 Chancel Choir Rehearsal

**Wednesday, January 25**  
2:30 It's Elementary  
4:30 Junior & Senior Choristers  
7:00 Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

**Thursday, January 26**  
9:30a Weekday Chapel  
10:00 Thursday Bible Study  
12:00p Endowment Committee Meeting  
6:00 Men of Westminster at Blockhouse Restaurant  
8:00 Narcotics Anonymous

**Friday, January 27**  
8:30a Hiking Group

**Saturday, January 28**  
6:30p Lightly Seasoned Group Event

**Sunday, January 29**  
**Fourth Sunday after Epiphany**  
9:00a Worship Service  
10:00 One Adult Sunday School  
10:55 Sunday Session Meeting  
11:15 Worship Service  
12:15p Annual Congregational Meeting  
1:00 GOAL Network Meeting  
2:00 Elder Training Class (1 of 3)  
4:30 Baptism Class  
4:30 First Steps Music Class  
5:00 Middler Youth Group  
5:15 Senior High Choir Rehearsal  
6:00 Youth Dinner  
6:30 Middler Choir Rehearsal  
Senior High Youth Group

the  
**HARBINGER**  
open minds open hearts

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**From the Pews, Parks Workman**

The new year is always a time of reflection. The stroke of midnight on New Year's eve seems to have inescapable significance, causing millions to ponder things left undone in the past year, plans for self-improvement, plans for new adventures, resolutions, hopes for success and good health, etc. Some of these reflections may even be spiritual. One may decide to commit to attending church more regularly. One may decide to build a habit of early morning quiet time with God. The stroke of midnight brings an opportunity for an old self to be washed away. An opportunity for a new self is presented.

Saul's conversion on the road to Damascus gives us the most famous conversion from old to new. Saul, the persecutor of the Christians, sees Jesus. Ironically, though he is temporarily blinded, his eyes are opened to the gospel of Jesus and the rest is history. Saul becomes a new self in Paul, becomes a follower of Jesus, and becomes one of God's chosen disciples to spread the good news to the world. Paul's life is radically new after his encounter with Jesus.

This leads me to a more difficult reflection that perhaps we should ponder as the clock turns from old to new. I recall a sermon from Ben in early 2020 – right before the pandemic took the world by storm. Ben shared a story of a priest that dreams of an “ordinary” Jesus that becomes a successful, well-liked, healthy man in his 40s and is the best carpenter in Nazareth—fitting with ordinary aspirations of success and health for a new year. If you encountered this “ordinary” Jesus – would there be any radical change? As Paul discovered on the road to Damascus, Jesus is not ordinary.

Thus, here comes the difficult questions, if you are a follower of Jesus: “What do you do?”, “How far do you go?”, “How much should your life be different because of an encounter with Jesus?” We can look to Ananias as an example. Ananias listens for Jesus. He answers when Jesus calls. Despite his best judgment, he listens to Jesus and acts on it. He has faith in Jesus' plan. Ananias shows mercy on Saul. Ananias forgives Saul's past wrongdoings. Ananias treats his enemy as a brother. Ananias shows Saul hospitality and partakes in the joy of Saul's baptism. In no small part due to Ananias' faith, Jesus' message is spread throughout the world.

As we reflect on the difficult questions, I think it will be hard for any of us to say we have gone far enough. However, there is always an opportunity for an encounter with Jesus. The good news is that you do not have to wait until midnight on New Year's eve. You can encounter Jesus right now. How is your life going to be different as a result?

**Our Vision:**  
**Open Minds Open Hearts**

**Our Pillars:**  
**Hospitality**  
**Generosity**  
**Justice**  
**Imagination**  
**Joy**

**Our Goals:**  
**Connect**  
**Serve**  
**Grow**