



Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Preparation for **Worship**

“Suffering and rejection sum up the whole cross of Jesus. To die on the cross means to die despised and rejected of men...a suffering Messiah was a scandal to the Church, even in its earliest days. That is not the kind of Lord it wants, and as the Church of Christ it does not like to have the law of suffering imposed upon it by its Lord.”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*

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 *Cantabile* Knecht

Choral Introit 11:15a *In the Lord I'll Be Ever Thankful* Berthier

* Call to Worship 1 Corinthians 1:27-31

Leader: God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise.
People: God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong.

Leader: God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God.

People: As it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

All: Let us worship God!

* Hymn #630 *Fairest Lord Jesus* CRUSADER'S HYMN

* Prayer of Confession

Almighty God, we confess that we do not understand your wisdom, truth, and power.

We make idols out of our own desires, striving to control the future, fooling ourselves into believing that we can make our lives secure.

Forgive us, Holy One, for not following your Son to his cross. Help us to understand our own fears.

Give us courage to move out of the shallow waters of material comfort.

Grant us strength to enter the deeper and riskier waters of faith.

Let us reimagine our lives in such a way that your love would lead us to joyful obedience and generous sacrifice, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. 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

Gospel Lesson, *Matthew 16:21-24* p. 798

Epistle Lesson, *1 Corinthians 2:1-5* p. 927

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon "In Weakness, Fear, and Trembling"

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.

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 9a *How Great Thou Art* arr. Courtney

Anthem 11:15a *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross* arr. Martin

* 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 #833 ST. MARGARET

O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go

* Charge and Benediction

* Choral Response 11:15a *Go Out With Joy* Davis

* Postlude *Toccata* Wagner

*All who are able may stand

Leading Worship **this Morning**

Ben Dorr, *preaching*

Mary Kathleen Duncan, *liturgist*

Elizabeth McNeely (9a), Frances Farmer (11:15a), *lay readers*

Todd Monsell, *organist and pianist*

Rosemary Hughes (9a), *soloist*

The Sanctuary Choir (11:15a)

Clay Smoak (9a), Brad Hawkins (11:15a), *head ushers*

Hastings Blumer, Jay Culclasure, Ross Glidewell,

Jara Jones, Meg McKnight (9a), *greeters*

Toni Paylor, Neil Shurley, Ginny Reed,

Marian Carpenter, LeAnne White (11:15a), *greeters*

Catherine McNeely, Sawyer Rentz (9a), *acolytes*

Mary Eliza Duncan, Maisie Lucas (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 this 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

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/>).

BOOK CLUB

The WPC book club will meet Tuesday, February 7, at 7p in the church library. Mary Martha Smoak will lead the discussion of *Lands of Lost Borders: Out of Bounds on the Silk Road* by Kate Harris. This narrative of the author's bicycle journey has been described as "exuberant and meditative, wry and rapturous." All are welcome to join.

THEOLOGY READING GROUP

The Theology Reading Group will meet Monday, February 20, at 7p in the Charter Room. Dianne Scherer will lead the discussion of a novel, *Peace Like a River* by Leif Enger. Read the book and join us for an interesting and informative evening. All are welcome invited.

OPEN MINDS • Education@WPC

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.

THE HARBINGER
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 29 - February 5, 2023

Sunday, January 29

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

- 9:00a Worship Service
- 10:00 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)
- 4:15 Youth Leadership Team
- 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

Monday, January 30

- 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous

Tuesday, January 31

- 12:00p Al-Anon
- 7:00 Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Wednesday, February 1

- 2:30p It's Elementary
- 3:30 Cherub Choir
- 4:30 Junior & Senior Choristers
- 7:00 Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, February 2

- 9:30a Weekday Chapel
- 10:00 Thursday Bible Study
- 4:00p Heritage Lecture Committee Meeting
- 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous

Sunday, February 5

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

- 9:00a Worship Service
New Member Class
- 10:00 One Adult Sunday School
Confirmation Class
- 10:55 Sunday Session Meeting
- 11:15 Worship Service
- 2:00 Elder Training Class (2 of 3)
- 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, Amanda Brinkley

1 Corinthians 2: 1-5

“And so it was with me, brothers and sisters. When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power, so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God’s power.”

In today’s environment, we are constantly bombarded with worldly wisdom. We are exposed to “wise” people and ideals from every direction—news outlets, social media, podcasts, and our peers. The wisdom of the world often sounds very impressive and confident, and has attractive goals of the good life and beautiful people. We’re continually enticed by the idea that if you keep working towards wisdom, you too can achieve these goals.

But even during Paul’s time, there was the distraction of fulfilling life in Corinth with the beauty, art, and music of the age. His words today remind us that we should strive for heavenly wisdom as further described in James 3: “... wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.”

God granted humans the ability to be able to gain wisdom, but where worldly wisdom goes astray is how to get there. It isn’t the right book, the right classes, or even the right church that grants us wisdom. As Paul directs, it is a demonstration of the Holy Spirit that leads us there. In today’s passage Paul comes in weakness, with fear and trembling, not with wise and persuasive words. He becomes nothing so that Christ may be everything. Warren Wiersebe, in his book *Be Wise*, says it best: “He wanted them to trust in God and not the messenger God sent. Had he depended on human wisdom and presented the plan of salvation as a philosophical system, then the Corinthians would have put their trust in an explanation. Because Paul declared the Word of God in the power of God, his converts put their faith in a demonstration: They experienced God at work in their own lives.”

Our Vision:
Open Minds Open Hearts

Our Pillars:
*Hospitality
Generosity
Justice
Imagination
Joy*

Our Goals:
*Connect
Serve
Grow*

Sunday School Information:

Children Sunday School Class Locations

Children ages 3K- 5th grade meet on the 100 hall to explore the stories of God's faithfulness using the PCUSA curriculum, Growing in Grace and Gratitude. Come and see how children build relationships and grow in faith during the Sunday School hour. Families lead the lessons and are encouraged in their faith also. For more information about Sunday School, speak with Parks Workman or Lauren Slingerland.

Children - Growing in Grace & Gratitude

3K/4K (Room 102)
5K/1st (Room 109)
2nd/3rd (Movie Room)
4th/5th (Room 112)

Youth Sunday School Class Locations

Youth - Feasting on the Word
Middlers (Youth Suite)
Senior Highs (Game Room of Youth Suite)

Westminster Academy

Adult Sunday School (February 2023)

Motivating Question: What role can religion play in racial justice?

Claire Gilliland – Room 212

Join us for a 4 week discussion on how religious beliefs and organizations can contribute to racial justice. Across our sessions, we will explore the Biblical motivations for pursuing racial justice, the empirical reality of racial inequality in the U.S., and the ways religious groups both positively and negatively contribute to racial justice in both their words and their actions. Designed to be an interactive course with both lecture and discussions, we will approach these big questions with a sense of curiosity and care.

Claire Gilliland is a Sociology professor at Furman University, where she researches how religious organizations both fight against inequality and sometimes make it worse. She completed her PhD from UNC-Chapel Hill in May 2021, and her dissertation focused on how clergy talk about social issues from the pulpit. She grew up Presbyterian and joined Westminster in 2021 with her husband. At WPC, she serves as a youth group advisor, on the Creation Stewardship Committee, and on the Heritage Lecture Committee.

Joy in Chains:

A Chapter-by-Chapter Study of Paul's Letter to the Philippians

Leigh Stuckey – Room 209

Press on toward the goal! Rejoice in the Lord always! Do not be anxious! Count all gains as loss! Accomplish all things through Christ! Paul's letter to the church in Philippi has been extracted for short bursts of biblical wisdom, but its richness lies in a developed understanding of its context, content, and core proclamation. Join us for this four week study of Philippians, one of Paul's most theologically rich letters written while he was a guest of the Roman magistrates and (literally) in chains. The letter is a thoroughgoing defense of Christian unity and is suffused with joy despite Paul's situation. It tells us not only who Christ is, but who we are called to be in light of that revelation. This course will attend to the letter chapter-by-chapter in brief lectures.

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