



Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

Preparation for **Worship**

“The Fear gives to the empty-handed, the empty-hearted, as to me from the stone stair he gave promise and blessing, and gave them also to Isaac before me, to Abraham before Isaac, all of us wanderers only, herdsmen and planters moving with the seasons as gales of dry sand move with the wind. In return it is only the heart’s trust that the Fear asks. Trust him though you cannot see him and he has no silver hand to hold. Trust him though you have no name to call him by, though out of the black night he leaps like a stranger to cripple and bless.”

– Frederick Buechner, *Son of Laughter*

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 *Voluntary* Boyce

Call to Worship Malachi 1

Leader: From the rising of the sun to its setting
People: **God's name is great among the nations.
 Let us worship God.**

* Hymn 45 Psalm 121: "I to the Hills Will Lift My Eyes" DUNDEE

* Prayer of Confession

Merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart
and mind and strength.
We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
In your mercy forgive what we have been,
help us amend what we are,
and direct what we shall be,
so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your holy name.

* Assurance of Pardon

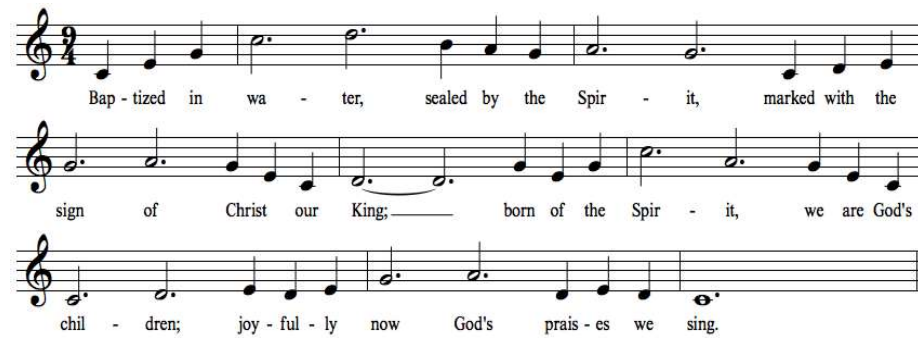
Leader: Friends, believe the good news of the gospel.
People: **In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.**

* Gloria Patri, Hymn 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.

The Sacrament of Baptism *Lucille Maxine Boan and Mary Allen Boan*

Congregational Response *Baptized in Water* BUNESSAN



Children in K5 - first grade are invited to leave for Children’s Church.

Hearing **God’s Word**

Prayer for Illumination

First Scripture Lesson, *Genesis 32:3-13* p. 26
 Second Scripture Lesson, *Genesis 32:22-32* p. 26

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

Sermon *"Night Terrors: the Cage Match"*

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

Offertory *Come, O Thou Traveler Unknown* YE BANKS AND BRAES
 arr. K. Lee Scott

* 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 211 "Hear, O Lord, My Plea for Justice" CHARLESTOWN
Stanza 1, soloist Stanzas 2-4, All

* Charge and Benediction

* Postlude *Trumpeting in B-flat Major* Melby

**All who are able may stand*

Leading Worship **this Morning**

Leigh Stuckey, *preaching*

Lauren Slingerland, *liturgist*

Parks Workman, *sponsor*

Kristen Blumer, *scripture reader*

Todd Monsell, *organist and pianist*

Brad Hawkins, *head usher*

Neil Shurley, Bill Holt, Ginny Reed,

Jordan Smith, Tom Vanderbloemen, *greeters*

Elizabeth Workman, Mary Wayne Workman, *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. The Women's Lounge, located down the stairs from the front office and straight down the hallway on the right, is available for any child caretaker and includes worship livestream, comfortable seating, and a changing table.

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.

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.

Join Us in Welcoming

BAPTISMS

This morning we welcome into our fellowship Lucille Maxine Boan and Mary Allen Boan, children of Blair & Miranda Boan.

In Memoriam

Mary A. Thomas
 (11/6/1931 - 7/14/2023)

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

We Remember in Prayer

Gena Runion on the death of her father, Roy Staggs, in Lufkin, Texas - 7/14/2023.

A GENTLE REMINDER

Summer is an opportunity for vacations, the beach, and time with family and friends. But even when we are away, the church remains active, with our children and youth ministries going strong, the weekday school running throughout the summer, and numerous outside groups using our facilities. In addition, our mission partners depend on us all year long. If possible, we ask you to consider keeping your giving up to date. Thank you for your generosity and faithfulness to God’s work at Westminster.

Opportunities @WPC

IT'S ELEMENTARY

This year It's Elementary will be learning about the seasons of the church year. Our theme is, "Ordinary, Extraordinary." There are many ways to nurture our children in this unique, after school ministry on Wednesdays. If you are interested in learning more about those roles contact Lauren Slingerland or Caroline Blouin. It's Elementary registration is required and will close on July 31. Visit the church website to register!

YOUTH SUMMER EVENTS

Throughout the summer, we have various opportunities for youth to engage in fun and fellowship. Calendars can be found on Instagram (@wpc_yg) and hard copies are in the atrium and outside of the main office. All events require registration on our website. Rising 6th graders are invited to join us for the Drive Game on 8/2. We hope to see you this summer!

WPC YOUNG ADULTS

If you identify as a young adult, join other WPC young adults for casual lunch and fellowship following worship this Sunday, July 23 at Southernside Brewing Co (25 Delano Dr). Kids are welcome. Questions? Contact Elizabeth Timmons at leizabethtimmons@gmail.com.

PVC TUTORS

Looking to get (or stay) more involved with Pleasant Valley Connection? Like last year, we are partnering with their after school program to provide individual tutors during the school year. Tutors are matched with a student for the entire school year. Volunteer times are Monday and Tuesday afternoons from 3:45-4:45p with 30 minute or full hour slots available. Please contact Lauren Slingerland or Anna Hanor for more information.

EDUCATION IN AUGUST:
COFFEE & CONVERSATION

Missing Sunday morning education this summer? Join us each Sunday in August at 9a in the Entrance Pavilion for an informal time of discussion and Biblical exploration led by Westminster's pastors. We'll read the lectionary text for the day and let the mood guide us in conversation. Buoying conversation will be coffee from WPC Mission Partner Cafe Justo (served by an excellent team of volunteers from the 2023 Mexico Witness & Service trip). Children are welcome to open gym time, supervised by two members of the WPC Kids Nursery team.

PROJECT HOST
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Looking for ways to serve this summer? Join volunteers from both WPC and the wider community to lend a hand at the Project Host Soup Kitchen every other Tuesday from 9a-1p. Volunteers will prepare, serve, and clean up a meal for our vulnerable neighbors, many of whom are experiencing homelessness. This is a great way to extend hospitality while getting a glimpse of some of the inequities in our own backyard. Sign up on WPC's website.

PROJECT HOST

The WPC Book Club will meet Tuesday, August 1, at 7p in the WPC Library. Jacqui Foster will lead the discussion of The Measure by Nikki Erlick. All are welcome to join us. Questions? Contact Ingrid Erwin at ingriderwin6@gmail.com.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS
July 23 - 30, 2023

Sunday, July 23
Eighth Sunday after Pentecost
Senior Highs to Montreat Youth Conference
9:40a Sunday Session Meeting
10:00 Worship Service
11:00 Donut Fellowship

Monday, July 24
Senior Highs to Montreat Youth Conference
Weekday School closed
9:00a VBS
6:00p Nominating Committee Meeting
8:00 Narcotics Anonymous

Tuesday, July 25
Senior Highs to Montreat Youth Conference
Weekday School closed
9:00a VBS
12:00p Al-Anon

Wednesday, July 26
Senior Highs to Montreat Youth Conference
Weekday School closed
9:00a VBS

Thursday, July 27
Senior Highs to Montreat Youth Conference
Weekday School closed
9:00a VBS
12:00p Endowment Committee Meeting (Zoom)
8:00 Narcotics Anonymous

Friday, July 28
Senior Highs to Montreat Youth Conference
Weekday School closed
9:00a VBS

Saturday, July 29
Senior Highs to Montreat Youth Conference

Sunday, July 30
Ninth Sunday after Pentecost
Senior Highs to Montreat Youth Conference
9:00a Education Committee Meeting
9:40 Sunday Session Meeting
10:00 Worship Service
11:00 Donut Fellowship
11:15 Civil Rights Pilgrimage Pre-Trip Meeting

Our Vision:
Open Minds Open Hearts

Our Pillars:
Hospitality
Generosity
Justice
Imagination
Joy

Our Goals:
Connect
Serve
Grow

the
HARBINGER
open minds open hearts

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From the Pews, Mary Frances Knapp

Fear. Guilt. Worry. Just me?

I am a planner by nature. I thrive on predictability, routine, and consistency. It feels safe to me. Most times I think if I can just prepare for what might come, I'll be ahead of the game. When things don't go according to plan (and let's be honest-that's how it usually goes), it's easy to let your mind go to a worst case scenario. Could I have changed this outcome? What if I had done something differently? If we can't control the little things, how can we ever control the big things? The reality is that we can't. Fear and worry are inevitable in our daily lives.

What does God teach us about handling our fears of the unknown?

When we hear the story of Jacob's return to his homeland, he is wrestling with his own fears and guilt. Jacob had wronged his brother, Esau, and he knew it. In anticipation of his return, Jacob sends a message to Esau, humbling himself to his brother in an attempt to gain back his favor. In response, Jacob hears that Esau has gathered 400 men to meet him upon arrival. Fearing the worst, Jacob splits his camp into two. It is a pragmatic and logical move. If one camp is attacked, the other half will have a chance to survive. Jacob then prays to God. God had told him to return to his homeland and that he would protect him. God tells Jacob he has prepared him for this, and that he will take care of him and his family. Jacob, trusting his faith in God, then abandons his logical, "safe" plan. God has told Jacob that he will protect him, despite his previous sins. Jacob places his worry and fear aside and puts his complete trust in God, accepting God's promise to him.

We are imperfect people. No amount of planning or scheduling will ever really give us any control over what happens in our day to day lives. And the good news is that's ok. Our fears and worries can even be a good thing! They lead us to prayer and faith in God and his promise to us. God tells us that in spite of our own sins and worries, he is here to protect us. He is perfect in his preparation of us and of what is to come.

And that just may be the best plan of them all.