



Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

Preparation for **Worship**

Everlasting God, in whom we live and move and have our being: You have made us for yourself, so that our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Give us purity of heart and strength of purpose, that no selfish passion may hinder us from knowing your will, and no weakness keep us from following your way. In your light, may we see others clearly, and in your service find perfect freedom, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. 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 *Beautiful Savior* arr. Monsell

Call to Worship Psalm 105:1-3

Leader: O give thanks to the Lord, call on God's name!
People: Make known God's deeds among the peoples.
 Leader: Sing to God, sing praises to God, tell of all God's wonderful works.
People: Glory in God's holy name! Let the hearts of all who seek the Lord rejoice! All: Let us worship God!

* Hymn 450 "Be Thou My Vision" SLANE

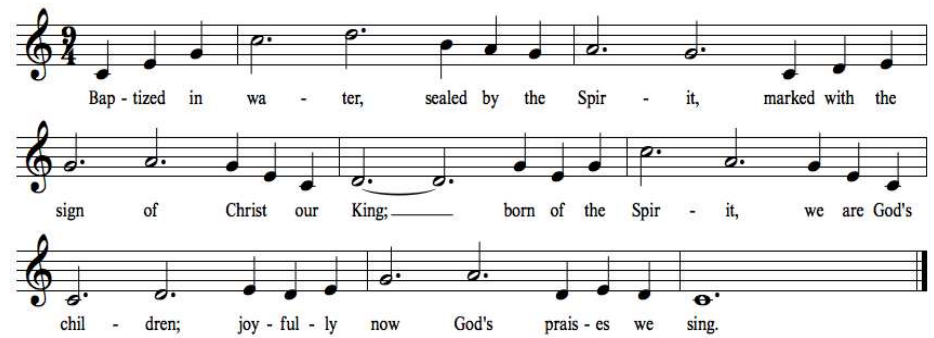
* Prayer of Confession
Good and gracious God, remind us today what it means to be your disciples, and show us once again who you created us to be. Far too often, we have fallen short of your intentions. Our faith has been half-hearted, our love has been self-serving, and our hope has been misplaced. We have trusted in the wisdom of this world, while our fear has overwhelmed our faith. Forgive us, Holy One. By your grace, grant us newfound courage, so that we might love friend, neighbor, and stranger alike, and forgive everyone everything. We ask it in Christ's name. Amen.

* 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 Adam Walker Breaux, Jr.

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
 Old Testament Lesson, *Deuteronomy 7:6-8* p. 144
 Gospel Lesson, *Matthew 13:31-33, 44-45* p. 795

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

Sermon "The Little Picture"

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 "Simple Song" from Mass Bernstein

* Doxology #606 OLD HUNDREDETH
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 459 "O Word of God Incarnate" MUNICH
 - * Charge and Benediction
 - * Postlude *Lift High the Cross* Manz
- *All who are able may stand*

Leading Worship **this Morning**

Ben Dorr, *preaching*
 Leigh Stuckey, *liturgist*
 Ingrid Erwin, *sponsor*
 Butler Mullins, *scripture reader*
 Todd Monsell, *organist and pianist*
 Kathlyn Hurst, *soloist*
 Ben Edwards, *head usher*
 Roger Gower, Amy Hawkins, Marian Carpenter,
 George McLarty, Emily Cole, *greeters*
 Ellen Reynolds, *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. 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.

In Memoriam

Terry Goldsmith Osborne
 (7/8/1931 - 7/17/2023)
*"I am the resurrection and the life."
 - John 11:25*

Join Us in Welcoming

BAPTISMS
 This morning we welcome into our fellowship Adam Walker Breaux, Jr., son of Adam & Deshia Breaux.

We Remember in Prayer

Tod Hyche on the death of his father, Jerry Hyche, on Monday, July 24, 2023 in Simpsonville.

OPEN HEARTS • Gathering@WPC

BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS
 Children are invited to bring their backpack for a blessing Sunday, August 6, 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!

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!

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.

CONNECTIONS

Connections Luncheon Group will meet on Sunday, August 13, at Limoncello (401 River Street) at 11:45a. Please RSVP to ruthjohnst51@gmail.com by Friday, August 11. Newcomers are always welcome!

WPC BOOK CLUB

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.

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.

JR AND SR CHORISTERS REGISTRATION

Registration for Junior (grades 1-2) and Senior (grades 3-5) Choristers is now open on the website! Choirs will meet from 4:30-5:15p on Wednesdays beginning August 16. Senior Choristers may also sign up to be an acolyte in Sunday worship. Parent volunteers are needed to assist Sunday morning acolytes on a rotating basis.

SUMMER CHOIR

Summer Choir will return to Sunday worship leadership in August. For those who are interested in participating, there will be a rehearsal this Wednesday, August 2, at 7p in the choir room. While this rehearsal isn't required to participate in Summer Choir, it will provide an opportunity to preview the music that will be presented in worship in August. Contact Marlon Hurst with questions or for additional information.

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.

THE HARBINGER
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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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David Edwards
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TRIUMPH TICKETS

Join other members of the WPC community for a fun outing to cheer on the Greenville Triumph Soccer Club. We have reserved a block of seats for our group on Saturday, August 5, at 7p as the Greenville Triumph take on the Charlotte Independence. Triumph games are played at Furman University's Paladin Stadium. The game on August 5 is also "Star Wars Night," so the first 150 fans into the stadium receive a complimentary light saber! Tickets to sit with our group are free, but space is limited so please reserve your tickets at [www.wpc-online.org](#).

CALENDAR OF EVENTS
July 30 - August 6, 2023

Sunday, July 30

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

- 9:00a Education Committee Meeting
Library Committee Meeting
- 9:40 Sunday Session Meeting
- 10:00 Worship Service
- 11:00 Donut Fellowship
- 11:15 Civil Rights Pilgrimage
Pre-Trip Meeting

Monday, July 31

- 8:00p Narcotics Anonymous

Tuesday, August 1

- 12:00p Administrative Committee Meeting
Al-Anon
- 7:00 Book Club Meeting

Wednesday, August 2

- 7:00p Summer Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, August 3

Civil Rights Pilgrimage

- 5:00p Health & Safety Committee Meeting
- 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous

Friday, August 4

Civil Rights Pilgrimage

Saturday, August 5

Civil Rights Pilgrimage

Sunday, August 6

Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

Civil Rights Pilgrimage

- 9:00a Blessing of the Backpacks
Membership Committee Meeting
- 9:40 Sunday Session Meeting
- 10:00 Worship Service with communion
- 11:00 Donut Fellowship

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, Will Edwards

The Kingdom of Heaven, what is it and how do each of us define it? Is it finite in that we can define it by words? Can we see it, hear it, touch it, smell it, feel it? Or is it infinite, ever expanding and in being so, is it indescribable by mere words?

Jesus told many parables, and he used the parables to teach his disciples and us about the kingdom of heaven. In Matthew 13: 31-33, He put forth another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that birds of the air come and make nests in its branches." He told another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened." Jesus is telling us that the kingdom of heaven has small beginnings, but great endings. A small amount is all that is needed to start and to grow and soon everyone will be part of its abundance. The kingdom of heaven is the word of God spread by each of us to each of us through the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 13: 44-45: "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field." "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it." The treasure and pearl mean so much to the person that finds it that they give up all that they must to acquire it because of the joy that it brings. All that we have, our souls, our lives because of the love and grace of God that leads us to the kingdom of heaven and the everlasting joy.

At the beginning I asked several questions about the kingdom of heaven and related four parables Jesus told. I ask again what the kingdom of heaven is? Is it one of the things I described in the opening or is it all these things? The answer is yes, yes to all. It is all these things and so much more.

Look around. The kingdom of heaven is right here among us, it surrounds us, it is part of us, and it is in us.