



Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Preparation for **Worship**

Behold, Lord, an empty vessel that needs to be filled. I am weak in faith; strengthen me. I am cold in love; warm me and make me fervent, that my love may go out to my neighbor. I do not have a strong and firm faith; at times I doubt and am unable to trust you altogether. O Lord, help me. Strengthen my faith and trust in you.

Martin Luther

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 *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing* Raney

* Call to Worship Isaiah 43:1-3

Leader: Thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel:

People: **Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.**

Leader: When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you.

People: **For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.**

All: **Let us worship God!**

* Hymn 49 "The God of Abraham Praise" LEONI

* Prayer of Confession

Holy and Almighty God, we know we are scared of what you ask us to do.

When you tell us to extend hospitality to all people, we settle for welcoming some.

When you ask us to be generous with all that we have, we decide to hedge our bets and take tiny risks.

When you ask us to love everyone, no matter who they are or what they do, we decide to judge them first and love them later.

Forgive us, gracious God.

Help us to see the ways in which we swim in the shallow waters of our faith.

Grant us courage to go into uncharted waters, trusting in your call, and abiding in your grace.

We ask it in Christ's holy 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.

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

Hearing **God's Word**

Prayer for Illumination

Old Testament Lesson, *Exodus 3:13-15* p. 44

Gospel Lesson, *Matthew 14:22-33* p. 796

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon "The Wind Was Against Them"

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 *I Will Arise* arr. Parker/Shaw

* 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 815 "Give to the Winds Thy Fears" FESTAL SONG

* Charge and Benediction

* Choral Response, Hymn 656 "We've Come This Far by Faith" THIS FAR BY FAITH
Please join the Summer Choir in singing.

* Postlude *Toccata* Young

*All who are able may stand

Leading Worship **this Morning**

Ben Dorr, *preacher*

Lauren Slingerland, *liturgist*

Jennifer Shurley, *scripture reader*

Todd Monsell, *organist and pianist*

The Summer Choir

Bryan Kelley, *head usher*

Ingrid Erwin, Jacob Barker, Bill Holt, Emily Cole, Carroll Farmer, *greeters*

Salters Kelley, *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.

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.

With Thanksgiving We Celebrate

BIRTH

The birth of a son, *Foster Thomas Lordo*, to Ross and Emily Lordo on Monday, August 14, 2023.

We Remember in Prayer

Wayne and Beth Brown on the death of their son, Taylor Scott Brown, in Greenville, South Carolina - 8/15/2023.

Terri Hoffman on the death of her father, Donald Workman Smith, in Greenville, South Carolina - 8/16/2023.

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.

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.

Opportunities @WPC

BASKETBALL

Children and youth ages 5K-Grade 12 are invited to register online for the church basketball season through Sunday, October 1. Registration may be accessed on the church's website (wpc-online.org). WPC members interested in being a coach or an assistant coach may contact Bryant Puntch (864-915-5686).

THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Thursday morning Bible study began on August 17. All are welcome to join in the study at 10a in the Charter Room as Ben leads discussion about the upcoming Sunday's scripture texts.

THEOLOGY READING GROUP

The Theology Reading Group will meet Monday, September 18 at 7p in the Charter Room. D'Etta Leach will lead the discussion of *Sacred Earth, Sacred Soul* by John Philip Newell. Read the book and join us for an interesting and informative evening. All are welcome.

WESTCONNECT

You're encouraged to participate in WestConnect, a ministry of small groups that share life, pray, and study together. The next six-week season launches in October and will focus on the Apostles' Creed. Groups meet throughout the week. Complete the interest form on WPC's website or in the Ritual of Friendship to get involved.

WEEKLY SANCTUARY CHOIR REHEARSALS

Weekly Sanctuary Choir rehearsals have resumed on Wednesdays at 7p in the Choir Room. Participation in the Sanctuary Choir is open to all who desire to take part. Contact Marlon Hurst for more information.

KICK-OFF BREAKFAST

Join your church family for the annual church-wide kick-off breakfast on Sunday, September 10. The Down South Breakfast menu will include scrambled eggs, cheesy yellow grits, crispy bacon, sausage links, biscuits (with gravy, butter, and jelly available), mini muffins, and mini quiches. The cost is \$12.50 per adult (including children ages 12 and older) and \$7.50 per child (ages 6-11). Children ages 5 and younger eat free. Sign up on the church website.

- 9a Breakfast
- 10a Sunday School
- 11:15a Worship

On September 17, we'll resume worship services at 9a and 11:15a with Sunday School at 10a.

MOVIE GROUP

Westminster's Movie Group welcomes anyone who enjoys seeing good movies and having lively discussions. The group generally meets monthly on a Sunday afternoon, but meetings depend on movie availability and schedule. Announcements are not made in the Harbinger because the movie schedule is often uncertain until the week before the Sunday we want to attend. Anyone interested in joining the group can contact Susan Robbins (jamrobbins@aol.com). She will add your name to the group's email list and will send out emails to arrange gatherings when an appropriate movie is in the theaters. The group always welcomes new members, and guests are always invited to attend.

BAPTISM CLASS

If you would like to have your child baptized at Westminster, our next Baptism class is scheduled for Sunday, September 10, 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.

THE HARBINGER
Westminster Presbyterian Church
2310 Augusta Street
Greenville, South Carolina 29605
(864) 232-2424
www.wpc-online.org

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August 27 - September 3, 2023

Sunday, August 27

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

- 9:00a Coffee & Conversation
Sunday School Teacher Training
- 9:40 Sunday Session Meeting
- 10:00 Worship Service
- 11:00 Donut Fellowship
- 5:30p Youth Group Class Dinners

Monday, August 28

- 8:00p Narcotics Anonymous

Tuesday, August 29

- 12:00p AI-Anon

Wednesday, August 30

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

Thursday, August 31

- 10:00a Thursday Bible Study
- 8:00p Narcotics Anonymous

Sunday, September 3

Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

- 9:40a Sunday Session Meeting
- 10:00 Worship Service
- 11:00 Donut Fellowship



LIFE@WPC

Wondering if weather will postpone an event? Need a reminder to sign up for a church-wide meal? Text "wpcgreenville" to (864)232-2424 to get up-to-date information about our life together! We promise we won't bombard you. Text today or follow the QR code.

the
HARBINGER
open minds open hearts

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From the Pews, Rosemary Hughes

As a relatively new addition to the Westminster community, I feel as though I am in a constant state of discovery regarding Presbyterian theology and beliefs, structure and polity, hymn tunes and texts, and the traditions that are specific to this congregation. A few months back, I offered my services as a Harbinger cover author, and had I known that my writing would land in the middle of a sermon series on “What Presbyterians Believe,” I would perhaps have quickly rescinded my offer. After all, not one single thing qualifies me to write about what Presbyterians believe ... at least not until a few more years of membership, Sunday School lessons, and thought-provoking sermons. Nevertheless, here we are, so I decided to approach this piece from the perspective of someone who is still learning what it means to be a faithful Presbyterian. On August 20, Rev. Dorr’s message centered on “What Presbyterians Believe About the Bible,” and he included three specific descriptors: call, covenant, and becoming a new creation. This morning’s focus centers on “What Presbyterians Believe About Miracles,” so I also have three personally-chosen descriptors: spectacular, symbolic, and singular. When I think about the idea of a miracle, I think about words like amazing, exceptional, inexplicable, incomprehensible, and all of those words carry an aura of being larger than life. Whether the miracle described is directly Biblical or a surprising yet welcome occurrence in one’s own life, the spectacularity of miracles can inspire feelings of divine providence or intervention. As already stated, my critical literary domain does not extend into the realm of whether or not the miracles described in the Bible “actually happened” in the literal sense (you will have to rely on Rev. Dorr to answer those questions!), but I expect we can all agree that miracles are deeply symbolic. When Jesus walked on the water, this act reveals God’s power over what the water represents in our lives (turmoil, chaos, seemingly impossible odds, etc.). Lastly, I believe that miracles are deeply singular. So much of our relationship with God is rooted in things we can neither see nor explain, and the personal, singular nature of miracles speaks to God’s limitless ability to be both immensely huge as well as small enough to carry inside our hearts. I am looking forward to learning more and more about being a Presbyterian in these coming weeks, and I hope that journey is nothing short of spectacular, symbolic, and singular.

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING - SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

The Session has called a congregational meeting for Sunday, September 10, immediately following the 11:15a worship service. The purpose of the meeting is to vote on two motions from the Session:

- a) That the congregation elect the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee to search for an Associate Pastor for Outreach and Congregational Life. The proposed slate for the APNC is the following: Coleman Dixon, Pam Evans, Roger Gower, Brad Hawkins, Steve Johnson, Leigh Miller, Frances Roe, Corey Sanders, and Sallie White;
- b) That the congregation add two youth elder positions to the Session, each serving a two-year term, with the first youth elder position starting in 2024, and the second youth elder position starting in 2025.

BACK TO THE BASICS, PART II “WHAT DO PRESBYTERIANS BELIEVE ABOUT...”

This fall, we will return to our sermon series, “Back to the Basics.” Last spring, we discussed the basics of Presbyterian theology and compared our beliefs with those of other Christian denominations, such as what Presbyterians mean when we talk about being “saved.”

This time around, we will examine the beliefs and values of our tradition that have multiple interpretations within our tradition. For example, do all Presbyterians believe the same thing about the Bible? What about war? Or tithing? Or miracles, suffering, sabbath, or what makes a good life? What do we do when the Bible itself presents different answers to the same questions? What are the boundaries of our beliefs when it comes to issues that don’t always have clear answers?

The aim of this sermon series is threefold:

- a) to find common ground within our beliefs about challenging topics;
- b) to identify places where we can “agree to disagree” with one another;
- c) to create space for our faith to grow, especially when more than one answer to a question can be a faithful answer.

SUPPERS WITH SEVEN: SEPTEMBER - NOVEMBER 2023

The summer vacation season is drawing to a close and it's time to get back into regular schedules. Are you ready to get back together with Westminster members? What about enjoying meals with other Westminster members? Suppers With Seven is seven persons - some couples, some singles, some older and some younger - gathering for a series of two or three meals. It is a great way to establish or renew relationships with other Westminster members. To sign up, return this form to the church office or fill out the form on the church website. The deadline to sign up is Monday, August 28.

Name(s): _____

Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Please check one: _____ I/We would be willing to host a first gathering. _____ I/We cannot host the first gathering, but would consider a subsequent one. _____ I/We cannot host but would like to be part of a group.

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WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

CAROLINA HIGH FOOD DRIVE

This September, consider donating to the Carolina High Food Drive! Carolina High offers critical food assistance to many of their students. They have a significant shortage of the following items: breakfast bars, cereal, peanut butter, canned meat, bags of dried rice, bags of dried beans, mashed potatoes, meal helpers (hamburger helper, etc.), powdered milk, and canned fruit. Consider donating today! We will have a collections table at the kick-off breakfast on Sunday, September 10.

Our Vision:

Open Minds Open Hearts

Our Pillars:

Hospitality

Generosity

Justice

Imagination

Joy

Our Goals:

Connect

Serve

Grow

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