



Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Preparation for **Worship**

"Even though discussion about predestination is likened to a dangerous sea, still, in traversing it, one finds safe and calm – I also add pleasant – sailing unless he willfully desire to endanger himself...Let this, therefore, be the way of our inquiry: to begin with God's call, and to end with it."

John Calvin

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 *You Have Come Down to the Lakeshore* arr. Monsell

* Call to Worship Ephesians 1, 2, Romans 8

Leader: For those God foreknew, God predestined.
People: Let us be conformed to the image of Jesus the Son.
 Leader: For it is by grace you have been saved through faith.
People: Let us pursue the good works God prepared in advance for us to do.

Leader: In love, God predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ.

People: Let us offer all praise to God for God's glorious grace.
All: Let us worship God!

* Hymn 624 "I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art" TOULON

* Prayer of Confession

**O God,
 We have wavered in our faith in the midst of suffering,
 and we have not persevered in prayer.
 We have claimed to be wiser than we are,
 and have even tried to correct you.
 We make excuses for ourselves rather than
 listening for your direction and heeding your call.
 Our days are so filled with the busyness of this world
 that we cannot see your grace among us.
 We are so weighed down by our own concerns
 that we have no energy for the good works
 you prepared for us to do.
 Surround us with your safe, calm, and pleasant love,
 that we may know the truth of your good news and be
 empowered to live out your call upon our lives. 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.

Hearing **God's Word**

Prayer for Illumination

First Scripture Lesson, *Psalms 105:1-6, 12-15, 43-45* p. 484

Second Scripture Lesson, *Exodus 3:1-12* p. 44

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon "Predestined"

Responding to **God's Word**

* Affirmation of Faith *From the 2nd Helvetic Confession of Faith*

We are elected for a definite purpose.

Finally, the saints are chosen in Christ by God for a definite purpose, which the apostle himself explains when he says,

“He chose us in him for adoption that we should be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption to be his children through Jesus Christ that they should be to the praise of the glory of his grace.”

We are to have a good hope for all.

And although God knows who are his, and here and there mention is made of the small number of the elect, yet we must hope well of all, and not rashly judge anyone to be reprobate.

For Paul says to the Philippians,

“I thank my God for you all” (speaking of the whole Church in Philippi), “because of your fellowship in the Gospel, being persuaded that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.”

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 *The Heavens Sing Praises* Beethoven/arr. Scott

* 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 804 "Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart!" MARION

* Charge and Benediction

* Postlude *Fanfare* Leighton

**All who are able may stand*

Leading Worship **this Morning**

Mary Kathleen Duncan, *preacher*

Ben Dorr, *liturgist*

Pam Evans, *scripture reader*

Todd Monsell, *organist and pianist*

Allie Ablewood, *soloist*

Jacob Barker, *head usher*

Parks Workman, Nikki Grumbine, Ingrid Erwin, Betsy Raines, Jordan Smith, *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.

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.

KICK-OFF BREAKFAST

Join your church family for the annual church-wide kick-off breakfast and learn more about many of WPC's ministries 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
- 12:15p Congregational Meeting

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

GREEN LOT CLOSED

Thank you for your patience the past few weeks while the Green Lot has been closed for resodding and restoration. We hope to open it for Sunday morning parking in the near future.

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).

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.

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.

WESTMINSTER BOOK CLUB

The WPC Book Club will meet Tuesday, September 5 at 7p in the church library. Ruth Johnston will lead the discussion of *Hamnet: A Novel of the Plague* by Maggie O'Farrell. Set in Warwickshire in the 1580s, this novel tells the story of Agnes and her husband and three children. After the son, Hamnet, dies, the husband writes a play that he calls Hamlet. This book gives life to a story usually consigned to literary footnotes. All are welcome!

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.

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. You may also bring donations during the month to the collection bin located in the Friendship Court.

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CREATION STEWARDSHIP

Join members of WPC's Creation Stewardship as they participate in the Friends of the Reedy River clean-up event on Saturday, September 16, from 9-11:30a. Check the weekly newsletter for a sign-up link or contact Nikki Grumbine (grumbine5@gmail.com) for more details.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS
September 3 - 10, 2023

Sunday, September 3
Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost
9:40a Sunday Session Meeting
10:00 Worship Service
11:00 Donut Fellowship

Monday, September 4
Weekday School closed
Church Office closed
8:00p Narcotics Anonymous

Tuesday, September 5
12:00p AI-Anon
7:00 WPC Book Club Meeting

Wednesday, September 6
10:15a Weekday Chapel
2:30p It's Elementary
4:30 Junior & Senior Choristers
7:00 Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, September 7
10:00a Thursday Bible Study
8:00p Narcotics Anonymous

Sunday, September 10
Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost
9:00a Kick-Off Breakfast & Connection Fair
10:00 Sunday School
10:55 Sunday Session Meeting
11:15 Worship Service
12:15p Congregational Meeting
4:30 Baptism Class
5:00 Middler Youth Group
5:15 Senior High Choir Rehearsal
6:00 Youth Dinner
6:30 Senior High Youth Group
Middler Choir Rehearsal

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, Christa Likes

Psalm 105:4 urges us to "Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always." How do we seek the Lord? What does this mean for those of us who are already in a relationship with him?

When we look at this verse in The Message, it says, "Keep your eyes open for GOD, watch for his works; be alert for signs of his presence." Be alert and watch. As I read this, I start to ask myself, am I paying attention? Am I watching for his works each day as I go about my own "important" business? Am I living intentionally, relying on him for my strength? Of course, we seek God by praying, reading Scripture, gathering with other believers for worship, and joining in the work of our church. However, this passage tells us we are to seek the Lord "continually." We should be seeking the Lord while we are in the classroom, the conference room, socializing with friends, traveling, or making decisions at work. We should be seeking the Lord by being open to his guidance, wisdom, and strength. How do we do this?

I recently read that just as consistent exercise trains the body (builds strength, endurance, and flexibility), intentionally seeking God through consistent prayer trains the heart to live in rhythm with Christ and helps us to follow His ways. When we create a habit of prayer in our lives, when it truly becomes a part of our everyday rhythms, we will train our mind and soul to go to God first, in all things. When we seek Him with our whole hearts, it will strengthen us day by day. This very act of seeking God honors him while allowing us to live for his purpose.