



Third Sunday of Advent

Preparation for **Worship**

To look at the last great self-portraits of Rembrandt or to read Pascal or hear Bach's B-minor Mass is to know beyond the need for further evidence that if God is anywhere, he is with them, as he is also with the man behind the meat counter, the woman who scrubs floors at Roosevelt Memorial, the high school math teacher who explains fractions to the bewildered child. And the step from "God with them" to Emmanuel, "God with us," may not be as great as it seems. What keeps the wild hope of Christmas alive year after year in a world notorious for dashing all hopes is the haunting dream that the child who was born that day may yet be born again even in us and our own snowbound, snowblind longing for him.

—Frederick Buechner, *Emmanuel*

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.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath Joe & Michelle Frasher

Prelude The Wexford Carol Hayes

Introit Advent Haiku Monsell

Please join in singing as invited; first in unison, then in canon.



A pro - mise fore - told, hum-ble birth in a man-ger.



Je - sus our Sav - ior. A

* Call to Worship
Leader: Emmanuel, God with us,
People: desire of all nations and savior of all:
Leader: Come and reconcile us, O Lord our God.
All: Come, Lord Jesus.

* Hymn 96 "On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry" WINCHESTER NEW

* Prayer of Confession
God of the future,
you are coming in power to bring all nations
under your gracious rule.
We confess that we have not expected your kingdom:
we live casual lives, ignoring your promised judgment
and casting off the yoke of discipleship.
We accept lies as truth, exploiting our neighbors,
abusing the earth, and refusing your peace.
In your mercy, forgive us.
Grant us wisdom to welcome your way,
and to seek things that will endure,
when once again Christ comes to judge the world. 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**
HURRY TO BETHLEHEM
Presented by the Junior and Senior Choristers

Oh, Come, Little Children arr. Bailey/Mayo

Nova, Nova Bedford
Soloists: Mary Alice Price, Lily McTyre

Oh, Sleep, My Dear Little Baby (A LaRu) arr. Hawn

Hurry to Bethlehem Pote
Junior Choristers

On This Day Earth Shall Ring arr. Brooke
Senior Choristers; Soloists: Ellis Bryan, Anna Clark Cameron,
James Knauer, Maisie Lucas, Caroline Riley

Seeing the Glowing Star arr. H. Kemp
Soloists: Freddie Hill, Ella Huffman, Elle Maness

Responding to **God's Word**

Offering
Offertory *O Magnum Mysterium* Lauridsen
The text and translation for the offertory may be accessed via the QR code
found in the announcements.

* Doxology Hymn 606 OLD HUNDREDTH

* Prayer of Dedication

* Hymn 134 *Joy to the World* Antioch (arr. Patterson)
stanzas 1, 2, 4 only

* Charge & Benediction
* Postlude *O Savior, Rend the Heavens Wide* Heffner
**All who are able may stand*

The Senior Choristers

Nora Blouin
Berkeley Blumer
Ellis Bryan
Anna Clark Cameron
Gretchen Cleveland
Mary Eliza Duncan
Gray Gault
Scarlett Gettys
Ella Heegard
Freddie Hill
Ella Huffman
Adeline Johnson
Salters Kelley
James Knauer

Maisie Lucas
Elle Maness
Lily McTyre
Reynolds Paradise
Mary Alice Price
Quinn Ray
Sawyer Rentz
Caroline Riley
Lucy Stephens
Miles Threatt
Francie Whitted
Elizabeth Workman
Mary Wayne Workman

The Junior Choristers

Camille Benson
Virginia Boan
Elizabeth Brinkley
Price Cameron, IV
Marion Campbell
Mary Earle Cleveland
Manning Dailey
Teddy Duncan
Henry Eckard
Jack Fountain
Reynolds Freeman
Charlie Gardener
Yates Gault
Gantt Gettys
David Heegard
Tilly Hill
Henry Hill
George Howell, V
Catherine Huffman
Wilder Hutcheson
McGhee Jackson
William Jackson, III

Mary Ellis Knapp
Carson Loveless
Everett Matthews
Ella Kate Maxwell
Brynn McTyre
Sawyer Morris
Emory Mowlajko
Bowen Mullins
Mae Murphy
Lillie O'Neal
Caroline O'Toole
Eleanor Parker
Thomas Price
Harrison Rentz
Charlie Stephens
Sadie Taylor
Abby Wheaton
Thomas Whitted
Anderson Williams
Wallace Wyeth
Mary Ellen Yeargin

Leading Worship **this Morning**

Leigh Stuckey, *preaching*
Ben Dorr, *liturgist*
Ben Bloodworth (9a), *scripture reader*
Todd Monsell, *organist and pianist*
Rosemary Hughes, *soprano*
Rosemary Hughes, Kathi Hurst, Jordan Smith (11:15a), *percussion*
Judy McKenney, *guitar*
Katie Knauer, *Children's Choir Coordinator*
Hunter Smith, *Senior Choristers Co-Director*
Martha Gower, *Choristers Accompanist*
Jacob Barker (9a), Brad Hawkins (11:15a), *head ushers*
Jacob Barker, Marian Carpenter, Lindsey Donlan,
Carroll Farmer, Zach Freeman (9a), *greeters*
Nikki Grumbine, Bill Holt, Ginny Reed,
Jordan Smith, Tom Vanderbloemen (11:15a), *greeters*

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 Family 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.

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.

INTROIT TEXT

The text for the Choral Introit "Advent Haiku" was written by the WPC Youth Choirs. The music was written by our organist, Todd Monsell. It was introduced on Advent 1 in the 9a service by the Youth Choir. We continue singing it on Advent 2 and 3 as a way to draw us into worship in this reflective and anticipatory season.

Join Us in Welcoming BIRTH

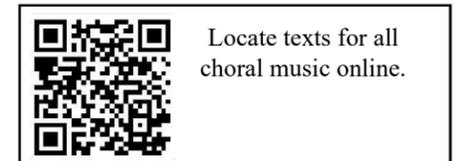
The birth of a son, *Ashton Burdine Nalley*, to Weston & Emily Nalley on Wednesday, November 1, 2023.

In Memoriam

Betty Crawford
(8/18/1929 - 12/4/2023)

Patricia Anderson
(11/21/1940 - 12/7/2023)

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



Locate texts for all choral music online.

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Opportunities @WPC

ADVENT GIFT MARKET

Prepare your mind and heart for the coming of the Christ child while exploring Christmas traditions and fair trade gifts in the Christmas Gift Market. On 17 and 24, there will be a small-scale gift market in the Sanctuary Atrium following worship.

WOMEN OF WESTMINSTER

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024
WOMEN'S RETREAT AT MONTREAT
CONFERENCE CENTER

CIRCLE MEETINGS

Tuesday, December 19

- Circle 7, at the home of Josie Williams (205 Quail Creek Ln) at 6p. Circle Chair: Josie Williams (jgwilliams1803@gmail.com).

WPC BOOK CLUB AND THEOLOGY READING GROUP

On Monday, January 15, at 7p, the WPC Book Club and the Theology Reading Group will meet jointly in the Charter Room. Jean Weaver will lead the discussion of *The Covenant of Water*, a novel by Abraham Verghese. Read the book and join us for an interesting evening. All are welcome.

LUNCHEON GROUP

The Luncheon Group will meet Wednesday, December 20, at 12:30p in Room 212. Leader: Mary Ann Cox (lmaryanncox@gmail.com).

HIKING GROUP

The next Hiking Group outing is set for Thursday, December 28, to Table Rock State Park. This is a 6.7 mile hike with 2,330 feet of elevation gain and is rated as hard. In the case of bad weather or trail conditions being such that doing this hike is inadvisable, we will do the Carrick Creek trail and the Pinnacle Lake trail in lieu of the Summit. Each of these trails is a 2-mile loop and leave from the Nature Center parking lot for a total of 4 miles. Ralph Bouton is the hike leader, contact Ralph if you plan to participate (ralphbouton@yahoo.com or (864)420-4656).

OPEN HEARTS • Giving@WPC

2024 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

As of Tuesday, December 12, we have received \$2,315,826 in pledges toward our 2024 pledge goal of \$2,688,000. For your convenience, you may pledge via our website at wpc-online.org/pledge-today, you may mail in your pledge, or send your pledge by email to the Church Financial Manager, Lynn Bennett, at lbennett@wpc-online.org.

2023 GIVING

2023 Pledges	\$2,412,817
Amount Received	\$1,886,290
Pledges Outstanding	(\$526,527)

Please have any contributions you wish to show on your 2023 contribution statement either postmarked by December 30, 2023, you can hand deliver to the Church office on or before December 29, 2023. You can also place your offering in the plate on Sunday, December 31st. By fulfilling your pledge, you enable us to keep faith with our mission partners.

RETIREMENT GIVING

Make Qualified Distributions from your IRAs: Westminster members age 70.5 and older can support the church with a gift from their Individual Retirement Account. Qualified charitable distributions from IRAs may offer tax advantages while benefiting WPC's local and global ministries. Contact the church office for more information.

LAST WEEK OF DECEMBER:

The church office will be closed on December 25 and 26. On Sunday, December 31, we will have one worship service at 10a.

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

[f](#) [t](#) [@](#) [v](#) [wpcgreenville](#) | wpc-online.org | 2310 Augusta St.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December 17-24, 2023

Sunday, December 17

Third Sunday of Advent

9:00a	Worship Service
10:00	Sunday School
	WestConnect - Kathleen Reynolds
	WestConnect - Leigh Miller
	WestConnect - George Howell
10:55	Sunday Session Meeting
11:15	Worship Service w/ Children's Christmas Musical
12:30p	Stated Session Meeting
4:00	Youth Movie Night

Monday, December 18

8:00p Narcotics Anonymous

Tuesday, December 19

12:00p	Al-Anon
6:00	Circle 7
7:00	Men of Westminster Board Meeting

Wednesday, December 20

Weekday School Closed

12:30p	Luncheon Group Meeting
6:45	Youth Hockey Night
7:00	Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, December 21

Weekday School Closed

8:00p Narcotics Anonymous

Friday, December 22

Weekday School Closed

Sunday, December 24

Fourth Sunday of Advent

10:00a	63rd Annual Service of Lessons & Carols
11:00	After Worship Reception
4:00p	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
6:00	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

(no nursery available at 6p)

Monday, December 25

Church Office Closed

Tuesday, December 26

Church Office Closed

the HARBINGER

open minds open hearts

VOLUME LXXVII | December 17, 2023 | No. 34

From the Pews, Will Edwards

Today is the third Sunday of Advent and we are lighting the “Shepherds Candle.” It is pink because rose is the liturgical color for Joy. This third week focuses on our intention of Joy. Joy in this season of Advent is what we want to feel and share. The Joy of family and friends, the joy of gatherings, and the joy of our community of faith here at Westminster Presbyterian Church. Most importantly, it is a beacon of Joy of the birth of Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Today’s scripture lesson is Isaiah 7:13-16. In this passage, the original birth announcement is made known. In verse 14 Isaiah says to King Ahaz “Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel.” Immanuel means “God is with us.” The sign is to convey that God is with his people and is a reassuring message. The sign is one that allows us and encourages us to look forward to his birth. The incredible birth that will bring great Joy to all people.

May we reflect and ponder on the Joy our faith brings to the surface, the Joy that is in our hearts and minds. The Joy that can brighten the darkest of days for someone: a family member, a neighbor, a friend, or colleague or even a random stranger (as we never know when angels are among us). Ben recently encouraged us to err on the side of grace. With Joy and God with us, grace can become us. Let us continue to celebrate this Joy as we await the birth of Jesus. Let us look for the sign that we have been given. May we know that our God is with us now and forever. Amen.

Our Vision:
Open Minds Open Hearts

Our Pillars:

Hospitality

Generosity

Justice

Imagination

Joy

Our Goals:

Connect

Serve

Grow

Sunday, December 17, 2023 |On Demand on Facebook & YouTube|9a



Third Sunday of Advent
Preparation for **Worship**

To look at the last great self-portraits of Rembrandt or to read Pascal or hear Bach's B-minor Mass is to know beyond the need for further evidence that if God is anywhere, he is with them, as he is also with the man behind the meat counter, the woman who scrubs floors at Roosevelt Memorial, the high school math teacher who explains fractions to the bewildered child. And the step from "God with them" to Emmanuel, "God with us," may not be as great as it seems. What keeps the wild hope of Christmas alive year after year in a world notorious for dashing all hopes is the haunting dream that the child who was born that day may yet be born again even in us and our own snowbound, snowblind longing for him.

—Frederick Buechner, *Emmanuel*

Gathering and Preparing for **God's Word**

Welcome and Announcements

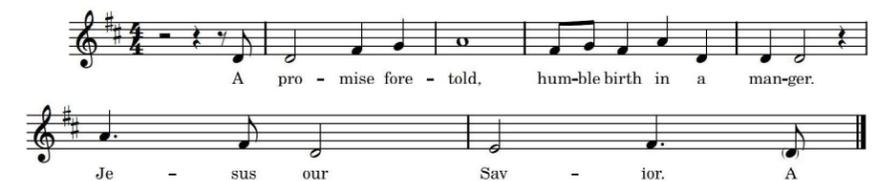
Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
People: **And also with you.**

Lighting of the Advent Wreath *Michael & Terri Hoffman, Alex & Katie*

Prelude *The Wexford Carol* Hayes

Introit *Advent Haiku* Monsell

Please join in singing as invited; first in unison, then in canon.



* Call to Worship

Leader: Emmanuel, God with us,
People: **desire of all nations and savior of all:**
Leader: Come and reconcile us, O Lord our God.
All: **Come, Lord Jesus.**

* Hymn 96 "On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry" WINCHESTER NEW

* Prayer of Confession

**God of the future,
you are coming in power to bring all nations
under your gracious rule.
We confess that we have not expected your kingdom:
we live casual lives, ignoring your promised judgment
and casting off the yoke of discipleship.
We accept lies as truth, exploiting our neighbors,
abusing the earth, and refusing your peace.
In your mercy, forgive us.
Grant us wisdom to welcome your way,
and to seek things that will endure,
when once again Christ comes to judge the world. Amen.**

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

* 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

Old Testament Lesson, Isaiah 7:13-16

p. 554

Gospel Lesson, Matthew 1:16, 18-25

p. 783

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

"Missing the Point"

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

O Magnum Mysterium

Lauridsen

The text and translation for the offertory may be accessed via the QR code found in the announcements.

* Doxology Hymn 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 362

"Rejoice! Rejoice, Believers"

LLANGLOFFAN

* Charge and Benediction

* Postlude

O Savior, Rend the Heavens Wide

Haffner

*All who are able may stand

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

ADULT EDUCATION ON SUNDAY MORNINGS

We at Westminster believe that education is essential for discipleship and hope that what you learn in this place will transform your living beyond our doors. This quarter will run each Sunday through January 14 - NOTE: there will not be Sunday School on December 24 or December 31. You are welcome to join any class at any point!

1. The Flock Reads Facilitated by Trey Morrow

Room 212

Join the Flock (an age-and-stage group at Westminster with folks ranging from mid-40s through late 50s) for an in-depth study of a book of the Bible. Each week the group will read and explore a text from the Gospels. This discussion-style class is facilitated by Trey Morrow and other members of the Flock.

2. Characters of Christmas Taught by Leigh Stuckey

Room 209 and Streaming

Join Associate Pastor Leigh Stuckey for this lecture-style class exploring oft-forgotten characters in the Christmas story: Mary & Joseph, the angels, Zechariah and Elizabeth, the Magi, and Simeon. Each Sunday we will explore the text and its context, and consider how the faith of each character can inspire our own.

Advent & Christmas at Westminster

December 17

Third Sunday of Advent

9a Worship in the Sanctuary

Children's Musical

11:15a in the Sanctuary

December 24

Fourth Sunday of Advent

The 63rd Annual Service of Lessons & Carols

10a in the Sanctuary

reception following service in Sanctuary Atrium

Candlelight Christmas Eve Worship

4p and 6p* in the Sanctuary

(overflow in the Sanctuary Atrium)

*There will not be nursery/childcare at the 6p service.

December 31

One Worship Service

10a in the Sanctuary

reception following service in Sanctuary Atrium

POINSETTIA/ENDOWMENT/HERITAGE LECTURE MEMORIALS

Those who wish to remember loved ones during the Christmas Season may do so in three ways. Poinsettias for the sanctuary may be purchased for \$15.00 or you may give to either the Endowment or Heritage Lecture Funds. Poinsettias will decorate the sanctuary at the Lessons & Carols and Christmas Eve Services. Please fill out the slip below or contact the church office, 232-2424. Donors may pick up their poinsettias after the Christmas Eve Service you choose to attend. Orders must be placed by Sunday, December 17.

Donor _____

In Memory of _____

In Memory of _____

In Honor of _____

In Honor of _____

Poinsettias x \$15.00 = \$_____ Endowment:_____ Heritage Lecture: _____