



First Sunday after Christmas Day

Preparation for **Worship**

Great God, we want to fulfill the law as Joseph and Mary did. We want to sing like the prophets did. We want to witness God's saving love like Simeon did. We want to tell everyone the good news like Anna did. Lead us in the ways of righteousness, that we might recognize your presence among us. We give thanks that while we know that life gives way to death, your death restores us to life. Deepen our faith so that, even as we testify to your birth, we might anticipate the eternal life you gave in your death. Teach us to obey and to serve; use us anywhere and anytime. In Jesus' name, we pray. 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 *Of the Father's Love Begotten* Hayes

* Call to Worship Psalm 126:1-3

Leader: As the land is renewed each year and new crops sprout,
People: so the Lord God is restoring us.
 Leader: We are transformed by God's glory and power,
People: God's revelation in a little child.
 Leader: Salvation shall bring complete transformation.
People: The Lord God is saving us.
With our whole being we rejoice in our God.
All: Let us worship God!

* Hymn 113 "Angels We Have Heard on High" GLORIA

* Prayer of Confession

God of glory,
you sent Jesus among us as the light of the world,
to reveal your love for all people.
We confess that our sin and pride
hide the brightness of your light.
We turn away from the poor; we ignore cries for justice;
we do not strive for peace.
In your mercy, cleanse us of our sin,
and pour out the gifts of your Spirit,
that as forgiven and renewed people,
we may show forth your glory
shining in the face of Jesus Christ. Amen.

* Assurance of Pardon

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

* Gloria Patri, Hymn 113, *Refrain only* GLORIA

Glo_____ria in excelsis Deo!
Glo_____ria in excelsis Deo!

The Sacrament of Baptism 11:15a Henry Mark Richard Glowacki

Congregational Response "Baptized in Water" Bunesan



Hearing **God's Word**

Prayer for Illumination

Old Testament Lesson, *Isaiah 61:10 - 62:3* p. 604

Gospel Lesson, *Matthew 2:22-40* p. 784

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon "Waiting"

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 *Who Would Send a Baby* Beall
The text for the offertory may be found by using the choral music QR code below.

* Doxology 143 "Angels, from the Realms of Glory" REGENT SQUARE

All creation, join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son,
evermore your voices raising to the eternal Three in One:
Come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ the newborn king!

* Prayer of Dedication

* Hymn 679 "Sing of God Made Manifest" SALZBURG

* Charge and Benediction

* Postlude *Sing We Now of Christmas* Hudson

**All who are able may stand*

Leading Worship **this Morning**

Lauren Slingerland, *preaching*
 Leigh Stuckey, *liturgist*
 Ingrid Erwin, *sponsor*
 Todd Monsell, *organist/pianist*
 Kathi Hurst, *soloist*
 Tony Threatt, *lay reader*
 Jeff Reynolds, *head usher*
 Russ Williams, Susan Robbins, Betsy Raines,
 George McLarty, LeAnne White, *greeters*
 Miles Threatt, *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 Family Lounge, located down the stairs from the front office and straight down the hallway on the right, is available for any child caregiver 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 meaning in faith. Please return the zipper bag and its contents each Sunday.



Locate texts for all choral music online.

Join Us in Welcoming

BAPTISM

We welcome *Henry Mark Richard Glowacki*, son of Brian & Bayleigh Glowacki, in our worship service this morning.

We Remember in Prayer

Randy Umstead on the death of his father, Harvey Umstead, on Wednesday, December 20, 2023, in Springfield, MO.



WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

OPEN HEARTS • Gathering@WPC

WOMEN OF WESTMINSTER
UPCOMING EVENTS

Women of Westminster Retreat -
February 23 - 25, 2024
at Montreat Conference Center

WPC BOOK CLUB

The Westminster Book Club will meet Tuesday, January 2, at 7p in the church library. We will not discuss a book, but will plan our reading schedule for the upcoming year. Please bring your ideas!

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.

Heritage Lecture Speaker@WPC

Announcing the 2024 Heritage Lecturer: M. Craig Barnes. Join us on Sunday, January 21, as he will lead both morning worship services, along with the one Adult Sunday School class. Barnes is the author of several books including *When God Interrupts*, *Pastor as Minor Poet*, and *Diary of a Pastor's Soul*.

Our Vision:
Open Minds Open Hearts

Our Pillars:
*Hospitality
Generosity
Justice
Imagination
Joy*

Our Goals:
*Connect
Serve
Grow*

OPEN HEARTS • Giving@WPC

2023 GIVING

2023 Pledges	\$2,412,817
Amount Received	\$2,088,751
Pledges Outstanding	(\$324,066)

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

FIRST STEPS IN MUSIC

Music is an important way to communicate with young children even before they are able to sing along. First Steps in Music is an opportunity at Westminster that provides important time for parents or grandparents to enjoy music with their child/grandchild. Led by WPC member Diana Dailey, the First Steps classes teach simple songs, games, and prayers for 2- and 3-year olds and adults to experience together. The next class will be offered from 4:30-5p beginning Sunday, January 21. Register is available on the home page of Westminster's website: www.wpc-online.org/events registration.

WPC YOUNG ADULTS

Join us Sunday, January 28, following the 11:15a service at Southernside Brewery (25 Delano Dr) for food and fellowship. Kids are welcome! Questions? Email Elizabeth Timmons at LElizabethTimmons@gmail.com.

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

THE HARBINGER

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

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Church Staff

Ben Dorr
Pastor & Head of Staff
bdorr@wpc-online.org

Leigh Stuckey
Executive Associate Pastor
lstuckey@wpc-online.org

Mary Kathleen Duncan
Associate Pastor
mkduncan@wpc-online.org

Lauren Slingerland
Associate Pastor
lslingerland@wpc-online.org

Terri Price
Parish Associate
tprice@wpc-online.org

Marlon Hurst
Director of Music
mhurst@wpc-online.org

Todd Monsell
Organist
tmonsell@wpc-online.org

Cara Puntch
Weekday School Director
cpuntch@wpc-online.org

Lynn Bennett
Financial Manager
lbennett@wpc-online.org

Michelle Little
Office Manager
michelle@wpc-online.org

Wendy Bagley
Secretary
wendy@wpc-online.org

Aly Friend
Director of Nurseries
alyfriend@wpc-online.org

Steve Phillips
Building Supervisor
sphillips@wpc-online.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December 31, 2023 - January 7, 2024

Sunday, December 31

First Sunday after Christmas

10:00a Worship Service

11:00 After Worship Reception

Monday, January 1

Weekday School Closed

Church Office Closed

8:00p Narcotics Anonymous

Tuesday, January 2

Weekday School Closed

12:00p Administrative Committee

Meeting

AI-Anon Meeting

7:00 Westminster Book Club

Wednesday, January 3

Weekday School Closed

7:00p Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, January 4

10:00a Thursday Bible Study

8:00p Narcotics Anonymous

Sunday, January 7

Second Sunday of Advent

9:00a Worship Service

Creation Stewardship Group

Membership Committee

Meeting

10:00 Sunday School

WestConnect - Kathleen Reynolds

WestConnect - Leigh Miller

WestConnect - George Howell

Confirmation Class

10:55 Sunday Session Meeting

11:15 Worship Service

2:00p APNC Meeting

5:00 Middler Youth Group

5:15 Senior High Choir Rehearsal

6:00 Youth Dinner

6:30 Senior High Youth Group

Middler Choir Rehearsal

the HARBINGER

open minds open hearts

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From the Pews, Joey Fievet

“THE LIGHT OF THE REVELATION TO THE GENTILES”

In this week's scripture, Luke 2:22-40, this phrase is highlighted. What does it mean? Two thousand years ago a devout old man, Simeon, waited and waited to see the Christ. The Holy Spirit had promised him that he would not see death until he had witnessed the Lord's Christ. Imagine his surprise—his joy, his elation—when that moment arrived!

But then came his prophecy—that the Child was appointed for the rise and for the fall of many in Israel. What were Mary and Joseph to think? How could they possibly comprehend what lay ahead for them? And for the nation of Israel. And for all of mankind, for that matter.

What followed has forever changed the world. With Christ's teaching and following the word rapidly spread throughout the region. People flocked to hear Him. Beginning with the poor and the disenfranchised, Christ's message reached more and more people and socioeconomic groups. Whether religious, non-religious, Jew, Gentile, Roman or simply an illiterate peasant—they rushed to see Him, to touch Him and to hear Him. His parables both fascinated and perplexed many. He created a greater hunger and thirst for the word of God.

He transformed the world. After His death and after his appearance to so many following His resurrection...and after Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus, word spread even more rapidly. Paul's many letters written from prison survive to this day and form the bulk of the New Testament.

We have such a rich legacy and heritage from our Savior and from the many who have propagated His Word throughout the centuries.

Christmas—the celebration of Christ's birth—gives us both an obligation and a remembrance to do what we should do. Feed the poor, clothe the naked, give presents to children less fortunate than our own... Volunteer in any of our many church programs, help the homeless, this list goes on... Show kindness, try to be meek—in short, help others.

We are here but for a short time. Let us make the most of it. Impact others in a positive way. Be as Christ would have us to be. Let “the Light of the Revelation” shine in our lives.