



Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Preparation for **Worship**

“Christ crucified’ condenses the message of the radical Paul into two words, the first century equivalent of a bumper sticker. Along with his concise crystallizations, ‘Jesus Christ is Lord’ and ‘in Christ’, it is his gospel in radical shorthand.”

Marcus J. Borg and John Dominic Crossan

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 *Gavotte with Variations* Depuis

* Call to Worship 1 Corinthians 15:12-20

Leader: Our proclamation is not in vain.

People: **And our faith is not in vain.**

Leader: Our faith is not futile.

People: **And no longer do we exist in our sins.**

Leader: Christ has been raised from the dead,

All: **the first fruits of those who have died.
Let us worship God!**

* Hymn 369 "Blessing and Honor" O QUANTA QUALIA

* Prayer of Confession

Loving God, we cannot truly worship you

until we recognize how unloving we have been.

We cannot truly live

until we admit the many ways we have been dwelling in death.

We cannot know forgiveness

until we honestly face the wrong we have done

and the good we have neglected.

We admit before you now

the anger and spite we have carried in our hearts,

the doubts and fears we have allowed to paralyze us,

the misplaced priorities that have led us

away from your will and way.

Help us to break down the barriers we have erected

so we can experience new life today. 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,

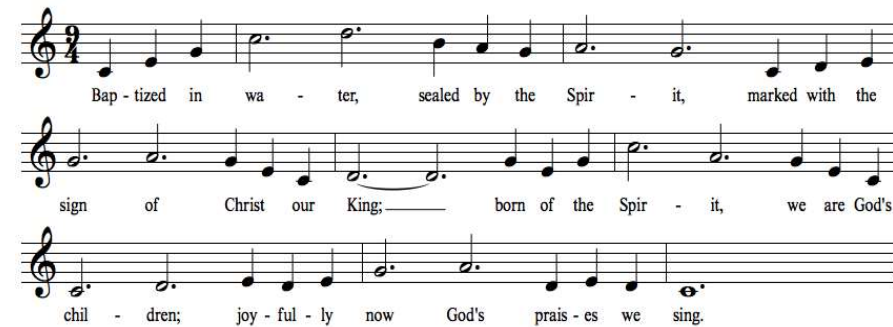
world without end. Amen, Amen.

The Sacrament of Baptism

Cason Louise Hanor

Congregational Response "Baptized in Water"

BUNESSAN



Hearing **God’s Word**

Prayer for Illumination

Old Testament Lesson, *Psalms 116*

p. 491

New Testament Lesson, *1 Corinthians 15:51-57*

p. 936

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon "A Mystery Story"

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 *Steal Away* Spiritual, arr. Burleigh

* 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 826 "Lift High the Cross" CRUCIFER

* Charge and Benediction

* Benediction Response, Hymn 501, stanza 4 "Feed Us, Lord" FEED US

Lead us, Lord, Lead us, Lord, nourished here by Christ, given strength for life.

Come and lead our hearts, O Lord.

* Postlude *Trumpet Tune in A Minor* Lasky

*All who are able may stand

Leading Worship **this Morning**

Mary Kathleen Duncan, *preaching*

Ben Dorr, *liturgist*

Claire Gilliland, *sponsor*

Betsy Raines, *scripture reader*

Todd Monsell, *organist/pianist/soloist*

Sanctuary Choir

Rosemary Hughes, *pianist*

Jacob Barker, *head usher*

Marian Carpenter, Lindsey Donlan, Claire Gilliland,

Zach Freeman, Nikki Grumbine, *greeters*

Sawyer Rentz, *acolyte*

WORSHIP NOTES

FALL SERMON SERIES

“Against the Grain: Paul’s Radical Message of Love and Hope”

The letters of the Apostle Paul are the earliest documents of the New Testament, written before any of the Gospels. They have shaped Christian theology and thought for centuries, and remain a powerful message of love and hope today. Our fall sermon series will explore Paul’s theology and the ways in which his message is good news, particularly in a time of cultural division, religious decline, and an upcoming election season. The topic this Sunday is resurrection.

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.

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.

Join Us in Welcoming

BAPTISM

This morning we welcome into our fellowship Cason Louise Hanor, daughter of David & Anna Hanor.

We Remember in Prayer

John White on the death of his mother, Barbara McIver White, on Thursday, August 22, 2024.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR KICK-OFF SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8.

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

The Men of Westminster will host our annual Kick Off Breakfast in the Fellowship Hall. The menu includes pancakes, bacon, scrambled eggs, and fruit. Sign up on the church website at <https://wpc-online.org/events-registration/church-wide-breakfast>. Cost is \$10/person, with \$40 max per family. Children 2 and younger are free. If you would like to volunteer to help with this breakfast, please contact the church office.

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

BAPTISM CLASS

If you would like to have your child baptized at Westminster, our next Baptism class is scheduled for Sunday, September 15, 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.



Texts for vocal solos and choral music may be found online by scanning this QR code.

WESTCONNECT

WestConnect groups are starting up again this October! WestConnect is a weekly small group ministry gathered around fellowship, study, and prayer. Fill out an interest form (located in the Ritual of Friendship books) to sign up, or contact Nick Carson with any questions.

THEOLOGY READING GROUP

The Theology Reading Group will meet in the Charter Room on Monday, September 16, at 7 p.m. Amos Workman will lead the discussion of *Life Together: The Classic Exploration of Christian Community* by Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Read the book and join us for an interesting and informative evening. All are welcome.

PVC HOMEWORK HELPERS NEEDED

Consider joining the wonderful team of homework helpers at Pleasant Valley. You will be paired with an elementary student to work with for the school year on homework and skills. We have availability Monday-Thursday afternoons for 30mins or 1hr time slots. Email Anna Hanor (ahanor@wpc-online.org) for more information and to get plugged into this great group!

BASKETBALL

Children and youth ages 5K-Grade 12 are invited to register online for the church basketball season through Sunday, October 13. 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).

CONNECT, SERVE, GROW SURVEY

Our long-range planning team, the Connect, Serve, Grow Task Force, needs your input! A survey has been created to gather feedback from all Westminster members, confirmed 10th graders and older. Your participation is essential as we evaluate Westminster's strengths, gifts, and future needs. The survey should take about 10-15 minutes and can be accessed through the QR code. If you prefer a paper copy, please contact the church office. For households with multiple confirmed members, we hope each of you will participate. The survey will remain open until the end of September.



WESTMINSTER BOOK CLUB

The WPC Book Club will meet Tuesday, September 3, at 6:30p in the church library. Betsy Raines will lead the discussion of *The River We Remember* by William Kent Krueger. Set in Minnesota in 1958, the book involves a Native American WWII veteran who is suspected of murdering a wealthy landowner. The book deals with the wounds left by wars and the ways in which victims heal. All are welcome!

YOUNG ADULT FELLOWSHIP

Join the WPC Young Adults on Sunday, September 8, following the 11:15a worship service for food and fellowship at Topsy Taco (15 Conestee Ave). Questions? Contact Emily Lordo at emilylordo@gmail.com.

CHERUB CHOIR

It's time for Westminster's youngest voices, 4K and 5K children, to register for Cherub Choir. Cherub Choir Director, Diana Dailey, will expose young voices to new sounds and experiences through music beginning October 2. Cherubs will meet in Room 210 from 3:30-4p. Parents may also volunteer to help with Cherubs on Wednesday. For more information, contact Diana Dailey (ddailey@wpc-online.org).

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 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, October 6. Click here to register or contact Diana Dailey for more information.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS
September 1-8, 2024

Sunday, September 1

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost
9:40a Sunday Session Meeting
10:00 Worship Service
11:00 Donut Fellowship

Monday, September 2

Weekday School Closed
Church Office Closed
8:00p Narcotics Anonymous

Tuesday, September 3

12:00p AI-Anon Meeting
Administrative Committee Meeting
4:30 Personnel Committee Meeting
6:00 Connect, Serve, Grow Task Force Meeting
6:30 Book Club Meeting

Wednesday, September 4

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

Thursday, September 5

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

Sunday, September 8

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost
9:00a Kick-Off Breakfast & Ministry Fair
10:00 Sunday School
10:55 Sunday Session Meeting
11:15 Worship Service
12:15p Young Adults Lunch
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, Mike Peters

Perhaps you are like me and dislike facing uncertainty. While I recognize that uncertainty is part of life, I do everything I can to minimize it. I search for and long for definitive answers to every question, while acknowledging that this is impossible. No question is more fundamental, more important, and at times, more troubling than what happens when we die. We want certainty. We desire to know precisely, but, of course, we cannot. It remains a mystery. And it is this mystery that Paul addresses in 1 Corinthians 15. His answer, at least to me, is both comforting and yet challenging. It addresses the ultimate question, but leaves the details unclear. Paul assures us that “Death is swallowed up in victory” – victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. But how this happens is shrouded in mystery, something unknown and unknowable.

We will be changed, Paul says, but in a way impossible to comprehend fully. Paul proclaims that we can be assured – we can be certain – that our earthly death, when it comes, is not the end, not the final word. There is another chapter – the beginning of a new journey in the presence of God.

Why can we have confidence in this ultimate future? Because of Christ's death and resurrection. Christ's sacrifice, his taking of our sins upon himself, saves us from the “sting” of death. For without Christ, Paul says, the sting of death is sin, and sin is inherent in us. So, while the details of what will take place may be murky, we can be comforted in the knowledge – the certainty – that because of Christ's intervention, we will live again with God. This is the foundation of our faith. It gives us the confidence to live our lives each day without fear and we hope in a way that glorifies God and serves our neighbors. Thanks be to God!