



Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Preparation for **Worship**

“My question is this: Are there in us, in you and in me now, that recklessness of the loving heart, that wild courage, that crazy gladness in the face of darkness and death, that shuddering faithfulness even unto the end of the world, through which the new things can come to pass?”

Frederick Buechner

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 *Prelude on BEACH SPRING* Callahan
Introit, Hymn 399 *11:15a* "God Welcomes All" THEMBA AMEN

* Call to Worship Ephesians 2:16-17, 19-20

Leader: Christ has reconciled us to God in one body through the cross.
People: **He proclaimed peace to those who were far off and peace to those who were near.**

Leader: So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,

People: **built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone.**

All: **Let us worship God!**

* Hymn 321 "The Church's One Foundation" AURELIA

* Prayer of Confession

Holy God, have mercy on us.
We have conflated peace with the absence of conflict, ignoring your command to work for justice.
We have confused worldly wisdom with your promises, staking our lives on wealth, power, status, and security.
We have lived contradictory lives, proclaiming your selfless love but living for our own gain.
Forgive us, Holy One, and shower us with your grace.
Remove our self-deception.
Rekindle our faith.
Restore our courage,
so that we would work for reconciliation in your world, even at the cost of our lives.
In Christ's name we pray. 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.

11:15a Children in K5 - first grade are invited to leave for Children's Church.

Hearing **God's Word**

Prayer for Illumination
Old Testament Lesson, *Genesis 33:1-10* p. 26
New Testament Lesson, *2 Corinthians 5:16-19* p. 940

Leader: The Word of the Lord.
People: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon "God's Accountants"

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 9a *God's Mercy Is Wide* Choplin
Offertory 11:15a "How Lovely Are the Messengers" from *St. Paul* Mendelssohn

* 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

Recognition of New Members 11:15a
The Sacrament of Baptism *Eliza Ann "Lila" Berry*

* Hymn 756 "O God of Every Nation" LLANGLOFFAN

* Charge and Benediction

* Benediction Response, Hymn 742 11:15a "We Will Walk with God" SIZOHAMBA NAYE
The choir and congregation sing together:

We will walk with God together; we will walk with God. We will walk with God together; we will walk with God. We will go rejoicing till the Kingdom has come. We will go rejoicing till the Kingdom has come.

* Postlude *Lift High the Cross* Manz

*All who are able may stand

Leading Worship **this Morning**

Ben Dorr, *preaching*
Mary Kathleen Duncan, *liturgist*
Trey Morrow, *sponsor*
Libba Mattison (9a), Ben Edwards (11:15a), *scripture reader*
Todd Monsell, *organist/pianist*
Chancel Choir (9a)
Sanctuary Choir (11:15a)
Rosemary Hughes, Diana Dailey (9a), *soloists*
Jacob Barker, *head usher*
Creighton Likes, George Howell, Zach Weaver, Carroll Farmer, Ben Dillard (9a), *greeters*
Trey Morrow, Elizabeth Timmons, Kathryn Freedman, Carrie Marguet, Sam White (11:15a), *greeters*
Manning Dailey, Sawyer Rentz (9a), *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 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

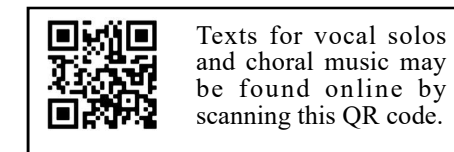
Each Sunday we offer worship bags in the Atrium for children. The worship bags are designed to include reusable items that engage children in open ended play during worship. While children attend worship with their families, they can participate in worship and play to make meaning in faith. Please return 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.

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.



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

With Thanksgiving We Celebrate BIRTH

The birth of a son, *Sinquefield McLain Scales, Jr.*, to McLain & Pearce Scales on Friday, September 13, 2024.

We Remember in Prayer

Byron Berry and his family on the death of Byron's father, Bill Berry, on Sunday, September 15, 2024.

INTERESTED IN JOINING WESTMINSTER?

Visitors interested in learning more about Westminster and joining the church are invited to attend our New Member Class from 9-10:30a this Sunday, September 22. Those who attend the class are invited to become members and be introduced during the 11:15a worship service that same day or on a future new member Sunday. Childcare is available. Please contact Nick Carson (ncarson@wpc-online.org) at 232-2424 to learn more and RSVP.

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 reconciliation.

2024 ADVENT DEVOTIONS

It's that time of year again when we are looking for volunteers to write short devotionals to be included in the 2024 Advent Devotions series. Please contact Abbie Coleman at abbie.garrison3@gmail.com if you would be willing to help with this.

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.

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).

WESTMINSTER BOOK CLUB

The Westminster Book Club will meet Tuesday, October 1, at 6:30p in the church library. Mary Martha Smoak will lead the discussion on *The Caretaker* by Ron Rash. This book is about a family dealing with their mother's romance with a film star before the children were born provoking various thoughts. Both hopeful and elegiac, it explores what it means to be happy even when the world is falling apart. All are welcome to come.

CHANCEL HANDBELLS

Chancel Handbells is a pilot, part-time music ensemble that will rehearse on select Tuesdays beginning October 1 and present music for occasional 9a worship services. Participation is open to adults and high school students who are proficient music readers. Contact Marlon Hurst to receive a link to register.

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.



LGBTQ+ GATHERING

Formerly Pride & Presbyterians, join us Tuesday, September 24 at 6p at The Commons for a LGBTQ+ Gathering. Come, grab a drink, and connect with other LGBTQ+ folks at WPC. Contact Nick Carson to RSVP!

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.

wpccgreenville | wpc-online.org | 2310 Augusta St.

THE HARBINGER

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS
September 22-29, 2024

Sunday, September 22
Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

- 9:00a Worship Service
New Member Class
- 10:00 Sunday School
- 10:55 Sunday Session Meeting
- 11:15 Worship Service
- 5:00p Middler Youth Group
- 5:15 Senior High Choir Rehearsal
- 6:00 Youth Open Gym/Snack
- 6:30 Senior High Youth Group
Middler Choir Rehearsal

Monday, September 23
8:00p Narcotics Anonymous

Tuesday, September 24
12:00p Al-Anon Meeting

- Wednesday, September 25
- 9:30a Weekday Chapel
 - 2:15p It's Elementary
 - 4:30 Junior & Senior Choristers
 - 7:00 Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

- Thursday, September 26
- 10:00a Thursday Bible Study
 - 6:00p Women of Westminster Kick-Off Social
 - 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous

Sunday, September 29
Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

- 9:00a Worship Service
- 10:00 Sunday School
Third Grade Bible Workshop
- 10:55 Sunday Session Meeting
- 11:15 Worship Service
Third Grade Bible Presentation
- 5:00p 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

VOLUME LXXVIII | September 22, 2024 | No. 23

From the Pews, Gaye Sprague

“...that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself,
not counting their trespasses against them,
and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us.”
2 Corinthians 5:19 NRSV

We are so blessed at Westminster to have a music program that provides beautiful, inspirational, uplifting, and interesting music in our worship services. My own singing sounds really good in my heart and in my head, but when it comes out into the world it is off key and a little squeaky. Even though I can't contribute to musical harmony, I can recognize it and appreciate it and am grateful for it.

One way to look at “reconciliation” is as “restoring harmony.” And don't we yearn for harmony these days? Political division in our country. War, death, and destruction in the Middle East and Ukraine. Environmental challenges such as wildfires and flooding. We could list many situations in which reconciliation is needed, but examples of lack of harmony don't just include national and international matters. Disharmony can be very personal and private. Strained family relations. Physical challenges. Financial stress. How can we restore harmony?

What a welcome message this week's scripture is! “In Christ, God reconciles the world to himself.” If that is not amazing enough, note this part: “not counting their trespasses against them.” What a gift! Not only do we have a way to restore harmony between us and God, but our past sins are not held against us. How often have our own sins contributed to disharmony?

Here is the hard part: “and entrusting the message of reconciliation (harmony) to us.” We have been entrusted with bringing harmony. Harmony between ourselves and God and between ourselves and others. It is definitely not an easy assignment, but we have been given Jesus' teachings to guide us. We have the Bible, weekly sermons, Sunday School, and multiple opportunities for Bible study at Westminster, and let's not forget prayer. Just a reminder: we can't hold the past sins of others against them. We have to forgive as God has forgiven us.

I doubt that I will wake up one day with a harmonious singing voice, but I know I have been given the gift of bringing harmony in other aspects of life if I'll just claim it.

2025 BOARD OF PENSIONS DUES INCREASE

Earlier this year, the Board of Pensions of the PC(USA) announced that it will restructure its benefits package for pastors in 2025 with the most significant changes they have made in four decades.

In the past, a pastor's spouse and/or children were automatically included in the dues that Westminster pays. Going forward, only pastors will automatically be included. Pastors may elect to cover their spouse and/or children for medical benefits through the Board of Pensions, and if they do, each PC(USA) church will need to decide whether to cover some or all of the additional cost.

The Personnel Committee has shopped around for other medical benefit options. The Board of Pensions medical benefits remain competitive and in line with market rates.

In 2025, Westminster will continue to cover the cost of Board of Pensions dues for our pastors and their spouse/children. Please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions you may have.

Betsy Raines, Personnel Committee chair
Stan Pendergrass, Finance Committee chair

WITNESS AND SERVICE TRIP TO SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO FEBRUARY 22- MARCH 1, 2025

Join us as we travel to San Juan, Puerto Rico to partner with the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance response in the Monteflores neighborhood of San Juan. Puerto Rico was severely affected by Tropical Storm Ernesto this past summer, and we'll be joining the ongoing disaster response effort which began in response to Hurricanes Irma and Maria. Contact Nick Carson to learn more or sign-up.

WOMEN OF WESTMINSTER MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR...

Weekday Social Wednesday, October 16 at 6p Join us for our monthly Happy Hour Social at the New York Butcher Shop. Come enjoy being with your WOW friends.

Church-Wide Lunch Sunday, October 27 at 12p Enjoy a yummy meal with WOW members and family. We will have a football themed raffle to support our Scholarship Fund for Fostering Great Ideas.

Weekday Social Tuesday, November 19 at 6p Join us for our monthly Happy Hour Social at Hoppin Greenville. Come enjoy being with your WOW friends.

Advent Luncheon Sunday, December 8 at 12p Join us for an afternoon of lunch and fellowship as we prepare for the Advent season.

PILGRIMAGE OPPORTUNITIES:

2024 CIVIL RIGHTS PILGRIMAGE OCTOBER 11-14

Travel to Charleston to learn more about the Gullah-Geechee community of South Carolina, visit Mother Emmanuel AMC, worship with a historically Black PCUSA congregation organized during Reconstruction, and visit the newly opened International African American Museum in Charleston.

2025 A PILGRIMAGE TO SCOTLAND MARCH 12-23

Join us on our inaugural international pilgrimage! The 12-day journey provides a deep dive into the Scottish roots of the Presbyterian Church.

Contact Leigh Stuckey with questions or for more information regarding either, or both, of these pilgrimages.



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.

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September 22, at 10a.

Children Sunday School Class Locations

Shine Curriculum

5K/1st (Room 109)
2nd/3rd (Movie Room)

Illustrated Ministry Mini-Revolutions

4th/5th (Room 112A)

Youth on Sunday Mornings

On Sunday mornings, our **Middlers** are invited to meet in the Entrance Pavilion at 10a. Each week they will alternate between a devotion & hang-out time in the Entrance Pavilion/Gym and service projects (*Sunday Servants*). This time will be supported by our Youth Intern, Samantha Hornung and parent volunteers.

Senior Highs are invited to join our Senior High West Connect that will begin meeting in October and is facilitated by youth elder, Ben Bloodworth. Sign-ups are online now. Senior Highs are also welcome to join the Middlers for *Sunday Servants* days.

Adult Sunday School (September 8-29)

Sola What? Exploring Capital "R" Reformed Faith for the 21st Century
led by Leigh Stuckey

Room 209

In the 16th Century Martin Luther revolutionized the Western world with his Ninety-Five Theses. Through his protests a new church movement began. Yet even then questions about how one comes to know God, how one is reconciled to God, and how one experiences God in worship were hotly contested. In opposition to Lutheranism and Episcopalianism a new "Reformed" theology began to be developed—one focused on God's absolute sovereignty, the revelation of God in the Word, and the glory of God in creation. From Reformed theology came Presbyterianism. "Sola What?" will explore classical Reformed theology—from the shape of worship to the much dreaded "predestination"—and its application to our life at Westminster.

A Prophet Has No Home: Understanding the Housing Crisis and What We Can Do About It

Room 212

Hear from a series of speakers as we explore one of the most critical issues facing our community: housing and homelessness.

September 22: Join **Greenville City Councilwoman Dorothy Dowe** to explore how our city government is managing growth and addressing the housing crisis.

September 29: Hear from **Susan McLarty, Executive Director of Greenville Homeless Alliance**, about best practice in caring for our neighbors experiencing homelessness and what we can learn from other cities.

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Room 209

In the 16th Century Martin Luther revolutionized the Western world with his Ninety-Five Theses. Through his protests a new church movement began. Yet even then questions about how one comes to know God, how one is reconciled to God, and how one experiences God in worship were hotly contested. In opposition to Lutheranism and Episcopalianism a new "Reformed" theology began to be developed—one focused on God's absolute sovereignty, the revelation of God in the Word, and the glory of God in creation. From Reformed theology came Presbyterianism. "Sola What?" will explore classical Reformed theology—from the shape of worship to the much dreaded "predestination"—and its application to our life at Westminster.

A Prophet Has No Home: Understanding the Housing Crisis and What We Can Do About It

Room 212

Hear from a series of speakers as we explore one of the most critical issues facing our community: housing and homelessness.

September 22: Join **Greenville City Councilwoman Dorothy Dowe** to explore how our city government is managing growth and addressing the housing crisis.

September 29: Hear from **Susan McLarty, Executive Director of Greenville Homeless Alliance**, about best practice in caring for our neighbors experiencing homelessness and what we can learn from other cities.