



Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

Preparation for Worship

You are home to the exile
touch to the frozen
daylight to the prisoner
authority to the silent
anger to the helpless
laughter to the weary
direction to the joyful:
come, our God, come.

— Janet Morley

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 Adagio Grieg

* Call to Worship Psalm 97

Leader: The Lord is king! Let the earth rejoice!
People: We tremble at God's awesome works!
The heavens proclaim God's righteousness!

Leader: The Lord is our guard and protector!
People: Light dawns and joy fills our hearts!
Rejoice in the Lord and give thanks!

All: Let us worship God!

* Hymn 330 Psalm 124 "Our Help Is in the Name of God" Old 124th

* Prayer of Confession

Merciful God,
you desire that the world might see your light
shine through us.

Yet we confess our vision is clouded
by the shiny distractions the world offers.

We turn from your way,
hurting the very ones we were called to serve,
in our action and our inaction.

We grow frustrated with each other,
seeking to silence anything besides our own desires.

We fail to see your righteousness and champion greed
and discord in the name of power and popularity.

Forgive us.

Melt us and mold us into more faithful disciples,
seeking your light, reflecting your mercy,
praying for freedom, and sharing your grace. 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

Mark Stephen Ahnrud, III

Congregational Response

Baptized in Water

BUNESSAN



Children in K5 – first grade are invited to leave for Children’s Church.

Hearing God’s Word

Prayer for Illumination

First Scripture Lesson, John 17:20-26 p. 880

Second Scripture Lesson, Acts 16:16-34 p. 900

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon "Free?"

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 Hear My Prayer arr. Hogan

* Doxology, Hymn 606 OLD HUNDREDTH

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 653 Psalm 107 "Give Thanks to God Who Hears Our Cries" MORNING SONG

* Charge and Benediction

* Postlude Life Everlasting Paxton

*All who are able may stand

Leading Worship this Morning

Lauren Slingerland, preaching

Leigh Stuckey, liturgist

Coleman Dixon, sponsor

Kathryn Freedman, scripture reader

Julie Florin, guest organist

Kristen Blumer, Bob Dellert, Rosemary Hughes, Kathi Hurst, Marlon Hurst,

Tim Judd, Derek Pitman, Emily Sweezey, Tina Wood, choral ensemble

George Howell, head usher

Jeff Reynolds, Amanda Warren, Kathryn Freedman,

Tim Reed, Mary Gentry, greeters

Manning Dailey, Luke Pruitt, 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.

In Memoriam

Gareth Crain

(12/22/1949 – 7/20/2025)

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



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



Join Us in Welcoming

BAPTISM

This morning we welcome into our fellowship Mark Stephen Ahnrud, III, son of Stephen & Emily Ahnrud.

With Thanksgiving We Celebrate BIRTH

The birth of a daughter, Hazel Claire Coleman, to Adam & Abbie Coleman, on Monday, July 7, 2025.

ACTS: CHARACTERS AND CONGREGATIONS

The book of Acts was written by the author of Luke, and the themes in both books echo one another. From the story of Pentecost to Paul's missionary travels, Acts narrates the characters, conflicts, and congregations of the earliest Christian community. Following the success of our Luke series, we will, this summer, preach through the book of Acts, meeting new characters and exploring Paul's journeys, overhearing conflicts around inclusion and ritual, and mapping the lessons that the first church can teach the modern church. This week's theme is freedom and prayer.

GIVING TO WPC

Did you know that you can fulfill your pledge or give an unpledged gift to Westminster online? Your gift helps our church keep faith with community partners and maintain excellence in our programming. To learn more about online giving, or to make a gift, follow the prompts from the QR code below.

SUMMER CHOIR
Summer Choir returns to service in August. There will be a rehearsal on Wednesday, July 30 from 7-8p to preview the pieces for the month. Sundayrehearsals will be held weekly in August at 9a in the choir room. This is a low-key, low-commitment way to participate in the choir. Adults and youth are invited to join in! For additional information, contact Marlon Hurst.

BINGO NIGHT
WPC Kids presents its 2nd annual Bingo Night! Fun for the whole family! On Wednesday, July 30, from 6-7:30p in the Fellowship Hall, children and their families are invited to a fun night of games, food, and prizes. A hot dog supper will be served. There is no cost, but please register so that we can have an accurate headcount. Look forward to seeing you there!

REGISTER NOW FOR IT'S ELEMENTARY!
We're excited to welcome students back to It's Elementary, our afterschool faith formation group for children in 1st-5th grades. It's Elementary meets on Wednesday afternoons during the school year from 2:30-4:30p and runs from September 3-April 29. This year's theme is *Grow with God*. Through Bible study, crafts, recreation, and games, children will explore how to live out these spiritual fruits in their daily lives. Member registration is currently open on the church's website. Non-member registration opens August 1. We are looking forward to a year of growth and discipleship together! Email Lauren Slingerland or Caroline Blouin (cblouin@wpc-online.org) with questions.

PLEASANT VALLEY CONNECTION HOMEWORK HELPERS
As we prepare for a new school year to start this fall, we are recruiting Homework Helpers to serve at Pleasant Valley Connection. Homework Helpers meet weekly with a student at PVC to help with homework and practice reading, math, and language. If you are interested in signing up or learning more, email Nick Carson at ncarson@wpc-online.org.

GAME GROUP
Join us Mondays in July at 7p in the Entrance Pavilion for our first series of Mahjong Nights! Open to all who love the game or want to learn it. If you have a game set and would be willing to bring it, please contact Emily Lordo (emilydlordo@gmail.com). See you 7/21 at 7p!

UNITED MINISTRIES
United Ministries is in need of canned food to restock their food pantry. They are requesting: canned fruit, peas, green beans, pasta, beef stew, canned chicken, rice, tuna, jelly, Ramen Noodles, Saltines, and oatmeal. If you would like to donate, please drop off cans in the United Ministries Donations Cabinet located in the Friendship Court.

WESTMINSTER BOOK CLUB
The Westminster Book Club will meet Tuesday, August 5, at 6:30p in the Library. Ingrid Erwin will review *Transcendent Kingdom* by Yaa Gyasi. All are welcome to attend.

FAITH FORMATION TRAINING EVENT AUGUST 10, 11A-1P
The Education Committee is hosting a Faith Formation Training Event on August 10 from 11a-1p in the Fellowship Hall. This event is for all members working with Children or Youth during the upcoming program year including WPCYG Advisors and Chaperones, Pleasant Valley tutors, WPC Kids (Sunday School, It's Elementary, Nursery, Children's Church). Lunch and childcare will be provided. Our special guest this year is Leigh Anne Ring, Educator and Minister from Richmond, VA. Contact Mary Kathleen Duncan or Lauren Slingerland for more information.

WESTMINSTER DAY OF SERVICE
Mark your calendars for Saturday, August 16, for our annual Day of Service, benefiting our local Witness and Service partners! We'll gather at the church for breakfast before going to our various service sites. Sign-ups are on the website.

RISE AGAINST HUNGER
On August 31, we will be hosting a Rise Against Hunger event following 10a worship at 11:15. We will work together to pack over 25,000 meals. This will bring WPC's lifetime meal packing to over 100,000 meals! Sign up by emailing Nick Carson (ncarson@wpc-online.org).

THE HARBINGER
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS
July 27-August 3, 2025

Sunday, July 27
Seventh Sunday after Pentecost
No Summer Choir

9:40a	Weekly Session Meeting
10:00	Worship Service
11:00	Fellowship with donuts

Monday, July 28

7:00p	Mondays in July Game Group
8:00	Narcotics Anonymous

Tuesday, July 29

12:00p	AI-Anon Meeting
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Wednesday, July 30

6:00p	Bingo Night
7:00	Summer Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, July 31

8:00p	Narcotics Anonymous
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Sunday, August 3
Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

9:00a	Summer Choir Rehearsal
9:40	Weekly Session Meeting
10:00	Worship Service
11:00	Fellowship with donuts
	Sixth Grade Day
	(11a-1p Youth Suite)

Ben Dorr is on sabbatical
May 19 - August 10.

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, Deb VanderVeer
Acts 16: 16-34

Well, this is certainly some interesting scripture. In this story we have a little occult, an exorcism, some political intrigue, an earthquake and in the end exuberant joy of the gospel.

The gospel often challenges the established order and those who profit from oppression.

It isn't your average Lord's day and there are lots of unanswered questions.

God has already sprung disciples from the Roman prisons twice in Acts (5:17 & 21; 12:6-11), so we shouldn't be surprised that the Philippian jail can't hold Paul and Silas. The earthquake in this text is a strange one as it is one that "sets free" instead of trapping or crushing. This earthquake is the visible manifestation of God shaking this world's powers to their foundation.

This is the escape story without an escape. Paul and Silas don't leave the prison. Being God's servants does not necessarily mean one escapes from dangerous places or situations, but it does mean the opportunity to be the voice and hands of Christ. Paul and Silas share the gospel in prayers and songs with their fellow prisoners (is that why the other prisoners, whose chains and doors also came undone, stayed put?)

Then they go on to save the Jailer both from suicide that Roman honor expected with a failure of duty (see 12:19); and from a life without faith in Christ.

So the Jailer's first question is "what do I have to do to be saved?" Why would he ask this? Why didn't he order everyone back to their cells? Why did all the prisoners, when chains and doors came undone stay?

Now back to Paul and Silas were praying and singing praises to God at midnight in jail. This shows their unwavering faith and praise in the face of adversity, leading to miraculous release and the ultimate conversion of the jailer and his family. Midnight symbolizes a time of darkness, both literal and spiritual. Their prayers and singing serve as a powerful witness to the other prisoners and a testament to God's power to intervene even in the darkest situations.

The Jailer asks Paul and Silas, "what do I have to do to be saved?" Asking this first seems a bit odd. Yet, there had to be something about Paul's kind compassion that must have made the jailer realize or recognize he was in the presence of someone who knew what life was about. Paul is stable, calm and at peace with the universe. Maybe the jailer suddenly sees his life with a clarity he has never known before.

The Jailer's life is changed by the gospel. He washes the wounds of Paul and Silas and he become their host. The call to faith in verse 31, rejoicing over faith in verse 34b frames a scene which we find the work of the Lord being spoken in verse 32, serving others in verse 33a, baptism in verse 33b and sharing a meal in verse 34a. This is a picture of the church's life, which the jailer and his family has now entered.

Some other questions that might arise are: What "chains" or "prisons" might be holding us back from experiencing the fullness of God? Have you ever felt trapped by physical, emotional, spiritual or unjust circumstances? Or just overwhelmed by circumstances?

Jesus is the ultimate chain breaker, offering salvation and freedom to all who believe.

Encouragement can be found in living lives of faith, prayer and praise, knowing God's power is always at work to bring liberation in unexpected ways.