



Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

Preparation for Worship

“Our security as believers lies, at it always has, not in the fulfillment of optimistic hopes for human progress, in either technology or super-power arms control. Our hope lies in the hands of a loving and powerful God. This knowledge enables us to speak, even when nuclear paralysis or fear of the future makes many stand in helpless silence. Since Pentecost nothing has been able to silence the tongues of God’s faithful witness. In your church and mine the story continues.”

—Will Willimon, Acts

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 O Day of Peace Callahan

\* Call to Worship (adapted from Psalm 107:1)

Leader: O, give thanks to the Lord, who is good!  
People: God's steadfast love endures forever.  
All: Let us worship God!

\* Hymn 686 "God of Our Life" SANDON

\* Prayer of Confession

Almighty God,  
you love us, but we have not loved you.  
You call, but we have not listened.  
We walk away from neighbors in need,  
wrapped in our own concerns.

We condone evil, prejudice, warfare, and greed.

We refuse to hear your word,  
and have trouble following your command.

Help us to admit our sin, and bind ourselves to you,  
so that as you come to us in mercy,  
we may repent and live as people forgiven;  
through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. 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 Eleanor Page Fiscus

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, Acts 1:1-2, 6-11 p. 884  
Second Scripture Lesson, Acts 28:16, 30-31 p. 913  
Leader: The Word of the Lord.  
People: Thanks be to God.  
Sermon "Without Hesitation"

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 The Old Hundredth Psalm Tune Vaughan Williams

\* 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 376 "When All Is Ended" YOGANANDA

Stanza 1 – Summer Choir; Stanzas 2-6 – All

\* Charge and Benediction

\* Postlude Processional in D Johnson

\*All who are able may stand

Leading Worship this Morning

Leigh Stuckey, preaching  
Mary Kathleen Duncan, liturgist  
George McLarty, sponsor  
Mike Peters, scripture reader  
Summer Choir  
Ben Edwards, head usher  
Blake Hoffman, Trey Morrow, Roger Gower,  
Walker Miller, Nancy Johnson, greeters  
Mary-Frances Reynolds, Virginia Reynolds, 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.



Join Us in Welcoming

BAPTISM

This morning we welcome into our fellowship Eleanor Page Fiscus, daughter of Gabe & Lauren Fiscus.

In Memoriam

Raymond Newsom  
(2/13/1943 – 7/26/2025)

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

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 the perseverance of the Gospel story.

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. Sunday rehearsals will be held weekly 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.

**GAME GROUP**  
The Game Group will continue meeting to play Mahjong on Mondays in August. Join us at 7p in the Entrance Pavilion. This is open to all who love the game or want to learn. Stay tuned for the September schedule.

**MEN OF WESTMINSTER DRIVE GAME**  
Join the Men of Westminster for a night at the Greenville Drive on August 27. We've reserved a private suite to enjoy the game. The cost is \$15 per person. Signup on the WPC website under Event Registration.

**CONNECTIONS**  
Connections, a lunch group for singles and couples, will meet on Sunday, August 17, at Limoncello (401 River Street) at 11:45a after the 10a worship service. Please RSVP to Ruth Johnston (ruthjohnst51@gmail.com) by Friday, August 15. All are welcome!

**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).

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS  
FOR KICK-OFF SUNDAY,  
SEPTEMBER 7**

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

Join us as we kick off the program year, for our annual Pancake Breakfast on Sunday, September 7, sponsored by the Men of Westminster! Come enjoy delicious pancakes and learn about the many ways to get involved in the ministry of WPC at our Ministry Fair. Breakfast begins at 9a, followed by Sunday School at 10a and Worship at 11:15a. 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 14, we will resume worship services at 9a and 11:15a with Sunday School at 10a.

**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.

**FAITH FORMATION TRAINING EVENT  
AUGUST 10, 11A-1P**  
The Education Committee is hosting a Faith Formation Training Event this Sunday, 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.

**THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY**  
The Thursday morning Bible study will resume on August 14 at 10a in the Charter Room. Ben and the pastoral staff lead discussions about the upcoming Sunday's scripture texts. All are welcome!

**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.

**THE HARBINGER**  
Westminster Presbyterian Church  
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**Church Staff**

- Ben Dorr  
*Pastor & Head of Staff*  
[bdorr@wpc-online.org](mailto:bdorr@wpc-online.org)
- Leigh Stuckey  
*Executive Associate Pastor*  
[lstuckey@wpc-online.org](mailto:lstuckey@wpc-online.org)
- Mary Kathleen Duncan  
*Associate Pastor*  
[mkduncan@wpc-online.org](mailto:mkduncan@wpc-online.org)
- Lauren Slingerland  
*Associate Pastor*  
[lslingerland@wpc-online.org](mailto:lslingerland@wpc-online.org)
- Nick Carson  
*Associate Pastor*  
[ncarson@wpc-online.org](mailto:ncarson@wpc-online.org)
- Terri Price  
*Parish Associate*  
[tprice@wpc-online.org](mailto:tprice@wpc-online.org)
- Marlon Hurst  
*Director of Music*  
[mhurst@wpc-online.org](mailto:mhurst@wpc-online.org)
- Todd Monsell  
*Organist*  
[tmonsell@wpc-online.org](mailto:tmonsell@wpc-online.org)
- Cara Puntch  
*Weekday School Director*  
[cpuntch@wpc-online.org](mailto:cpuntch@wpc-online.org)
- Lynn Bennett  
*Financial Manager*  
[lbennett@wpc-online.org](mailto:lbennett@wpc-online.org)
- Michelle Little  
*Office Manager*  
[michellec@wpc-online.org](mailto:michellec@wpc-online.org)

**BEN'S SABBATICAL PROJECT**

During his sabbatical, Ben met with 10 Heads of Staff of churches similar in size to Westminster, in order to learn more about how the leadership of each church helps cultivate a culture of generosity at their congregations. Topics included stewardship campaigns, endowments, staff size, "missing giving," and more. If you would like to find out what Ben learned, he will be giving a report immediately following worship on Sunday, August 24, at 11:15a in Room 209. All are invited.

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS  
August 10-17, 2025**

**Sunday, August 10**  
*Ninth Sunday after Pentecost*  
9:00a Summer Choir Rehearsal  
Witness & Service Committee Meeting  
9:30 Blessing of the Backpacks  
9:40 Weekly Session Meeting  
10:00 Worship Service  
11:00 Fellowship with donuts  
Faith Formation Training Event

**Monday, August 11**  
8:00p Narcotics Anonymous

**Tuesday, August 12**  
12:00p AI-Anon Meeting

**Thursday, August 14**  
11:00a Bible Study  
8:00p Narcotics Anonymous

**Saturday, August 16**  
*WPC Day of Service*

**Sunday, August 17**  
*Tenth Sunday after Pentecost*  
9:00a Summer Choir Rehearsal  
9:40 Weekly Session Meeting  
10:00 Worship Service  
11:00 Fellowship with donuts  
11:15 Stated Session Meeting  
11:30 Connections Group  
4:00p WPCYG Parent Meeting  
5:30 WPCYG Class Dinner

**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, Gaye Sprague***

This summer our associate pastors (with one sermon from Ben before he went on sabbatical) have delivered interesting, inspirational, and engaging sermons on the book of Acts. The sermons have been interesting through all the drama in Acts such as Pentecost, Stephen’s stoning, the earthquake that offered freedom from jail to Paul and Silas, the blinding light in Saul’s conversion, and the selection of Matthias to replace Judas as one of the twelve through basically a game of rock, paper, scissors. The series has been inspirational through characters our pastors have brought to life such as Lydia, Peter, Saul/Paul, the Ethiopian Eunuch, Simon the magician, and Tabitha.

Also, the series has been engaging through the personal stories our pastors have used to illustrate their messages. We learned from Mary Kathleen’s memories from this year’s youth mission trip, from the Caesar’s Head view that Lauren experienced on her Earth Sciences field trip, and from Nick’s lessons about packing light on his 100-mile canoe trip. We’re glad that Ben’s admitted first reaction to a potential call to WPC which was, “Don’t worry, Heather. We are not moving to Greenville, SC.” was not his final decision, and we won’t forget Leigh’s musings on her (hopefully distant) future gravestone message.

Today’s scripture takes us back to the beginning of Acts. Back to Jesus’ ascension and his promise to the disciples that they would receive the power they would need to be his witnesses to the ends of the earth. Back to their asking him one last time, “Is it now, Lord? Is now when you will bring back the Kingdom of Israel?” Back to their looking at each other and realizing that spreading Jesus’ message was up to them.

In Ben’s sermon he reminded us that, though the last half of Acts is mostly about Paul, the book is about “not one saint, but a community of saints.” I’m so grateful for the reminder of the community of the early church and the struggles they experienced that are not that different from the struggles churches experience today. I’m grateful for the reminder that each of us is a part of our church community and that we all will be given the power we need to persevere when we need it. And, I’m grateful that I’m in this community with all of you.