

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Sunday, September 20, 2026 |On Demand on YouTube|9a & 11:15a



Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost
Preparation of Worship

How great is your love, Lord God, how wide is your mercy! Never let us board up the narrow gate that leads to life with rules or doctrines that you dismiss, but give us your Spirit so that all would be welcomed with affection, and your church would never exclude secret friends of yours, who help show us the love of Jesus Christ, the One who came to save us all. Amen.

The Book of Common Worship, Daily Prayer

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 *Lift High the Cross* Monsell

* Call to Worship John 15:12-16

Leader: Jesus said: This is my commandment,
that you love one another as I have loved you.

**People: No one has greater love than this,
to lay down one's life for one's friends.**

Leader: Jesus said: You did not choose me but I chose you.

**People: And I appointed you to go and bear fruit,
fruit that will last, so that the Father
will give you whatever you ask him in my name.**

All: Let us worship God!

* Hymn 309 "Come, Great God of All the Ages" ABBOT'S LEIGH

* Prayer of Confession

**Good and gracious God, forgive us for fortifying our defenses.
We have built walls around our homes,
forgetting your command to be hospitable to the stranger.
We have been captured by consumerism,
pretending that convenience is the goal of Christian life.
We have disregarded our souls, seeking security and success
instead of the sacrificial love of Christ.
Have mercy on us, O Lord.
Send your Holy Spirit to break through our illusions,
so that our faith would be focused on finding the lost,
lifting up the lowly,
and embracing those who are difficult to love.
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.***

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Sacrament of Baptism 11:15a Henry Bates Norris

Congregational Response *Baptized in Water* BUNESSAN



Presentation of Bibles to Third Graders 11:15a

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

Hearing **God’s Word**

Prayer for Illumination

First Scripture Lesson, *Ephesians 2:8-10* p. 950

Second Scripture Lesson, *Matthew 16:13-20* p. 798

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon "Do You Have to Belong to a Church in Order to Be a Christian?"

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 Psalm 122: *Let Us Go to the House of the Lord* Hutto

* Doxology Hymn 606 OLD HUNDRETH
***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 306 "Blest Be the Tie That Binds" DENNIS

* Charge and Benediction

* Benediction Response 11:15a, Hymn 544 Taizé
"Bless the Lord, My Soul"

Please join the Sanctuary Choir in singing.

* Postlude *Procession II* Ore

**All who are able may stand*

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Leading Worship **this Morning**

Ben Dorr, *preaching*

Mary Kathleen Duncan, *liturgist*

Carrie Marguet (11:15a), *sponsor*

Paul Grier (9a), Kathryn Freedman (11:15a), *scripture readers*

Kathi Hurst, Marlon Hurst, Hunter Smith, Ruth Porten (9a), *Quartet*

Sanctuary Choir (11:15a)

Lynne Robinson, *handbells*

George Howell (9a), Brad Hawkins (11:15a), *head ushers*

Clay Smoak, Mandy Pruitt, Kathryn Freedman,

Coleman Dixon, Trey DuBose (9a), *greeters*

Jennifer Shurley, Trey Morrow, Jennifer McDavid,

Josie Williams, Mike Peters (11:15a), *greeters*

Grace Huerta (11:15a), *acolyte*

WORSHIP NOTES

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.

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.

CHORAL AND VOCAL TEXTS

Choral and vocal texts for worship services may be found via the Harbinger Hub QR code.

We Remember in Prayer

Amy Phillips on the death of her father, Earl Raymond McKnight, on Friday, September 11, 2026.

Join Us in Welcoming

BAPTISM

This morning we welcome into our fellowship *Henry Bates Norris*, son of Brandon & Lindsay Norris.

FALL SERMON SERIES

***CHRISTIAN QUESTIONS WITH
MORE THAN ONE ANSWER***

In our Presbyterian Book of Order, one of the historical theological tenets that grounds us is the concept of “Mutual Forbearance,” which means “there are truths and forms with respect to which [people] of good characters and principles may differ.” (Book of Order, F-3.0105) Our fall sermon series will explore questions with more than one faithful answer, questions you may have asked yourself from time to time. Our question this Sunday is “Do You Have to Belong to a Church in Order to Be a Christian?”

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 on Sunday, September 27. 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.

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 by using the new Harbinger Hub QR code.

WestConnect Groups

WestConnect groups are starting up again this fall. Groups will be studying *The Heart of the Psalms: God's Word to the World* by James C. Howell. WestConnect groups meet for six weeks at a time in the Fall and Spring, and use videos and discussion guides that correspond with each season's book. If you are interested in facilitating a WestConnect group, contact Nick Carson.

Cherub Choir

Cherub Choir, for children PreK 4- and 5-year-olds, is a joyful place where young children can explore music through singing, movement, rhythm activities, and creative play. Along the way, they will learn simple music skills, build friendships, and discover how music can be a way to praise and worship God. Led by Lynne Robinson (lynne@wpcgreenville.org), Cherub Choir meets weekly on Wednesday afternoons, beginning September 30, from 3:30-4p. Visit the Harbinger Hub to register!

First Steps

First Steps offers an opportunity for 2-and 3-year-old children to sing, move, listen to, and explore music. This class allows a parent or grandparent the experience of participating 1:1 with their child each week. First Steps meets on Sunday afternoons beginning on October 4 and is directed by Diana Dailey (diana@wpcgreenville.org). Visit the Harbinger Hub to register!

Basketball Registration

Children and youth ages 5K-Grade 12 are invited to register for the church basketball season through Sunday, October 11. Registration may be accessed through the Harbinger Hub. WPC members interested in being a coach or an assistant coach may contact Bryant Puntch (864-915-5686).

Harbinger Hub:

All the links from today's Harbinger in one place.

Scan the QR code to explore and engage with this week's bulletin. You'll find links to events, registrations, ministries, and opportunities to grow and connect within Westminster.



WPCYG - September 20

WPCYG is off-campus this Sunday evening, September 20. Please secure your ticket by Friday, September 18 at 4p - to either of these outings. If you're interested after Friday, please reach out directly to Mary Kathleen Duncan. We also extend a special invitation to all youth in 6th-12th grades to attend the first week of Youth Sunday School this Sunday, from 10-11a. Breakfast is provided!

Acknowledgement of Giving Cards

We acknowledge that faithful giving may be offered to Westminster Presbyterian Church in a variety of ways. If you give electronically or by other means, please feel free to place an Acknowledgement of Giving card—found in the Ritual of Friendship—in the offering plate as a sign of your worship and offering to God.

Guatemala

Witness and Service Trip

In October 2027, we will partner with Porch de Solomon, a Guatemalan mission organization that hosts construction and medical mission trips in the basin region of Lake Atitlan in Guatemala. We will be hosting both a construction and medical mission team. An interest meeting to learn more about the trip will be held in the Charter Room on November 22 at 12:15p following worship. Reach out to Nick Carson with any questions!

WPC Kids 4th & 5th Grade Field Trips

This year, 4th and 5th graders will have the opportunity to explore their faith through field trips and witness and service experiences. These field trips are an optional part of It's Elementary, but they are also open to any 4th or 5th grader who would like to participate. Our hope is that these trips will be a great point of connection for our older elementary kids and even if they can't attend It's Elementary each week, they can join the group for these events. On October 7, children have a choice of a group trip to Conestee Nature Preserve to explore creation or hearing a professional Gullah storyteller, Anita Singleton Prather, also known as "Aunt Pearl Sue." There is no cost and families can sign up through the Harbinger Hub by September 30.

📍📺 wpcgreenville | wpc-online.org | 2310 Augusta St.

The Harbinger

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www.wpc-online.org

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Director of Nurseries
aly@wpcgreenville.org

Calendar of Events

September 20-27, 2026

Sunday, September 20

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

9:00a	Worship Service
10:00	Sunday School
	Third Grade Bible Workshop
10:55	Weekly Session Mtg.
11:15	Worship Service
12:30p	Stated Session Meeting
2:00	Middler to SCCT
5:15	Youth Choir Rehearsals
6:30	Senior Highs to Concert

Monday, September 21

10:00a	Staff Meeting
4:30p	Game Group
8:00	Narcotics Anonymous

Tuesday, September 22

12:00p	AI-Anon
7:00	Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Wednesday, September 23

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

Thursday, September 24

10:00a	Thursday Bible Study
11:30	Grief Writing Workshop
8:00p	Narcotics Anonymous

Sunday, September 27

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

9:00a	Worship Service
	New Member Class
10:00	Sunday School
10:55	Weekly Session Mtg.
11:15	Worship Service
12:15p	New Member Reception
12:30	Minute for Stewardship Speaker
	Training
5:15	Youth Choir Rehearsals
6:00	Youth Dinner
6:30	Middlers Youth Group
	Senior High Youth Group

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 LXXIX | September 20, 2026 | No. 25

From the Pews, Scott & Susan Clark

In Matthew 16:13–20, Jesus asks his disciples a simple but profound question, “Who do you say that I am?” It is a question about identity, but it is also a question about relationship. Who is Jesus to you? That answer undoubtedly changes as you move through life. The God you know as a child may not be the same God you know as an adult – not because God has changed, but because you change.

Childhood is short. You spend only a handful of years there, yet those years shape you for the rest of your life. In childhood, your world is small. And at the center of that world are your parents, a parent, or a parental-figure. They are your first teacher, your first provider and protector, hopefully your first example of love and grace. They teach you, often without realizing it, what the world is like and what you should expect from it. Their words become part of the voice inside your head. Their habits become patterns you may carry forward in your life. Their love – or the absence of it – can leave an imprint that lasts long past the time it is occurring.

And then, almost imperceptibly, childhood ends.

You grow up, and your relationship with your parents changes. As a child, you need them for almost everything. As teenagers, you begin to question them. As a young adult, you may distance yourself from them as you try to discover who you are apart from them and build your own life. Later, you may begin to see them differently – as complicated human beings who were themselves once children, young adults, and uncertain people just trying to figure out how to navigate life. If you are fortunate, adulthood can bring you to a new kind of relationship with your parents – one based less on their initial role in your life and more on love, gratitude, friendship, and shared lived experiences.

Your relationship with God may follow a similar path.

The God you encounter as a child may be the God your parents or your Sunday School teachers taught you about – a God who watches over you, answers prayers, and knows right from wrong. As you grow, you may question that understanding. You may go through seasons when God seems very close and seasons when God seems distant or silent. You may lose faith, find it again, or discover that your beliefs were too small and simple to contain what you now know about the realities of life and faith.

“Who do you say that I am?”

Your answer to that question becomes more personal and more complex through time, formed by the joy and grief, certainty and doubt, distance and return that you encounter. Still, Jesus keeps asking – “Who do you say that I am?” – inviting you to shape your relationship with God based not on who you used to be, but on who you are and are becoming.

PRESENTATION OF BIBLES TO THIRD GRADERS

Leader: What is the church?

All: We are the church: the people who believe the good news about Jesus, who are baptized, who share in the Lord’s Supper. Through grace, the Spirit renews us so we may serve God in love.

Leader: How do we know this good news?

All: Through reading the Bible and hearing it taught and preached. The Holy Spirit inspired those who wrote the Bible and helps us rely on its promises today.

CHILDREN’S PRAYER

Dear God, as we read and study our Bibles, by your Spirit help us to learn about your love for us in Jesus Christ. Help us to learn how to follow you. Amen.

CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER

Holy God, when these children were baptized, we promised to guide and nurture them by word and deed, with love and prayer, encouraging them to know and follow Christ and to be faithful members of his church. We pledge ourselves anew to this promise. Amen.

**SAME WPC.
NEW WEB ADDRESS.**

Please update your bookmarks and contact lists! WPC has updated our online domain to **wpcgreenville.org**. Our email addresses have changed, too. In addition to using the new **@wpcgreenville.org** domain, many staff email addresses have been simplified to use first names only. The back of the Harbinger now reflects all updated contact information. Our former website automatically redirects to the new domain, and emails sent to old staff addresses will continue to forward to the correct inboxes, creating a smooth transition. Because new email addresses can sometimes look suspicious, we especially want you to know that emails from **@wpcgreenville.org** are from Westminster. We’re excited for this update and for a web and email presence that more consistently reflects WPC across our communication channels.

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Join us for a new term of Adult Education!

The Revelation Revisited

September 20 - October 4

Room 209 and Streaming

Facilitated by Ron Shive, *retired Presbyterian minister*

Perhaps you have been frightened at one point in your life by someone's bizarre interpretation of The Revelation of John. Maybe you have found yourself worried that the rapture was going to occur and you would be left behind. It is time to revisit this most often avoided book of the New Testament and realize that John was not trying to frighten us, but rather challenge us to live courageous, faithful, and hopeful lives. This class will be taught by Ron Shive, retired Presbyterian minister.

Discussion Class:

September 20 - December 13 [September 20 facilitated by Anna Hanor]

Room 212

Join us each week for a discussion-based Sunday School class to dive into a weekly topic and scripture passage. All are welcome to join us on a journey of faith and fellowship - come every week or come when you can. Topics change every week, and the class is facilitated by rotating members.

Children on Sunday Mornings

Nursery is available for infant through 4K on the Mezzanine level.

During Nursery, children in 4K explore the Bible story through play.

Starting September 20:

Children Sunday School Class Locations

- Shine Curriculum - 5K/1st (Room 109)
- 2nd/3rd (Movie Room)
- 4th/5th (Room 112A)

Youth on Sunday Mornings

Youth in grades 6th-12th are invited to meet in the Youth Suite for Sunday School from 10-11a. Facilitated by Claire & Mac Gilliland, this class will study the *Feasting on the Word* curriculum. When numbers dictate, this class will split into separate Middler and Senior High Discussion Groups. We hope you'll join us this year!

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309 Come, Great God of All the Ages

1 Come, great God of all the a - ges; make your earth - ly
 2 Come, Christ Je - sus, flesh and spir - it, sure foun - da - tion,
 3 Come, great Spir - it, in and with us, tune our ears to
 4 Come, O come, in cel - e - bra - tion, house - hold of the

mis - sion known; speak through ev - ery deed and per - son;
 cor - ner - stone; help us form the church e - ter - nal;
 hear your call; through the mov - ing of your pres - ence,
 one true God; in com - mit - ment and re - joic - ing

let your way and will be shown. Guide the church to true com -
 may your vi - sion be our own. Send a mes - sage to each
 let re - deem - ing love re - call min - is - try in ded - i -
 let us go where Christ has trod; as we act in faith and

mit - ment; give di - rec - tion now, we ask; fit us for the
 fol - lower; lead all peo - ple to your way; urge us to strong
 ca - tion, love em - bod - ied in our deeds; chal - lenge us to
 rev - erence, let us, Lord, the fu - ture see; place us in the

This text was written in 1987 for the capital cornerstone campaign of the National Presbyterian Church in Washington, DC. It is set here to a mid-20th-century tune created in wartime England to replace a Haydn tune tainted by Nazi associations.

TEXT: Mary Jackson Cathey, 1987

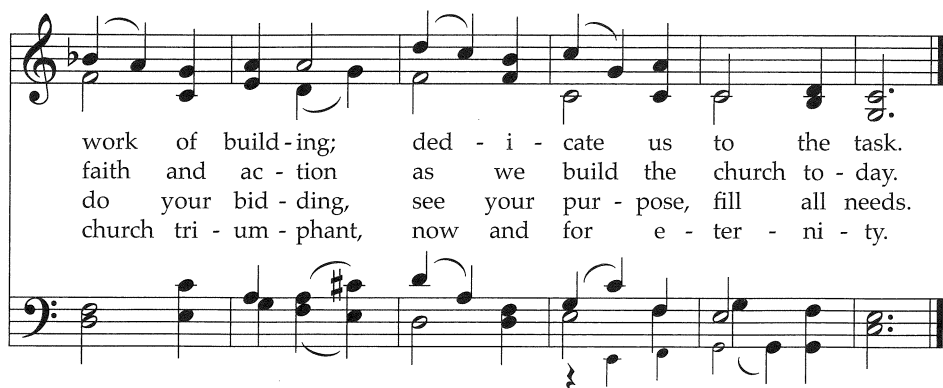
MUSIC: Cyril Vincent Taylor, 1941

Text © 1990 Hope Publishing Company

Music © 1942, ren. 1970 Hope Publishing Company

ABBOT'S LEIGH

8.7.8.7.D

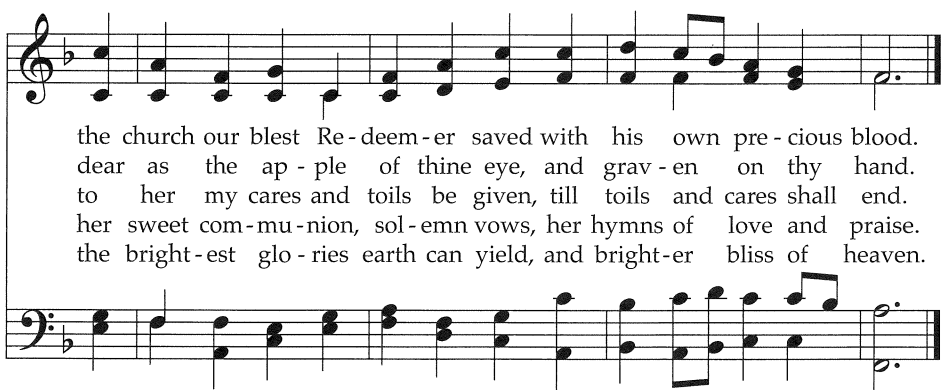


work of build - ing; ded - i - cate us to the task.
 faith and ac - tion as we build the church to - day.
 do your bid - ding, see your pur - pose, fill all needs.
 church tri - um - phant, now and for e - ter - ni - ty.

I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord 310



1 I love thy king - dom, Lord, the house of thine a - bode,
 2 I love thy church, O God. Her walls be - fore thee stand,
 3 For her my tears shall fall; for her my prayers as - cend;
 4 Be - yond my high - est joy I prize her heaven - ly ways:
 5 Sure as thy truth shall last, to Zi - on shall be given



the church our blest Re - deem - er saved with his own pre - cious blood.
 dear as the ap - ple of thine eye, and grav - en on thy hand.
 to her my cares and toils be given, till toils and cares shall end.
 her sweet com - mu - nion, sol - emn vows, her hymns of love and praise.
 the bright - est glo - ries earth can yield, and bright - er bliss of heaven.

One of the oldest American hymn texts in continuous use, this paraphrase of Psalm 137 was created by a president of Yale University while compiling a popular revision of Watts's *Psalms of David*. The arranger of the tune was the clerk of a Presbyterian church in London.

Blest Be the Tie That Binds 306

1 Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in
 2 Be - fore our *Fa - ther's throne we pour our
 3 We share our mu - tual woes; our mu - tual
 4 When we are called to part, it gives us
 5 From sor - row, toil, and pain, and sin we

Chris - tian love. The fel - low - ship of
 ar - dent prayers. Our fears, our hopes, our
 bur - dens bear. And of - ten for each
 in - ward pain; but we shall still be
 shall be free; and per - fect love and

kin - dred minds is like to that a - bove.
 aims are one, our com - forts and our cares.
 oth - er flows the sym - pa - thiz - ing tear.
 joined in heart, and hope to meet a - gain.
 friend - ship reign through all e - ter - ni - ty.

*Or "Maker's"

Written to express a pastor's unwillingness to leave a beloved congregation, this hymn is frequently used as an expression of Christian fellowship, especially at the conclusion of the Lord's Supper. The tune is attributed to an influential Swiss musician and publisher.

Bless the Lord

Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's ho - ly name.

Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me in - to life.

This refrain based on Psalm 103:1 is meant for repeated singing. To “bless God’s holy name” (which could not be spoken by observant Jews) is a reminder to be grateful even for what we cannot comprehend, trusting that God’s providence will show us “the path of life” (Psalm 16:11).