



Third Sunday of Advent

Preparation for **Worship**

God of good news, God of joy, your Spirit is always at work in our midst. Your nearness brings life and salvation. Help us join in the songs of our ancestors who have declared your mighty works through the generations. Let our praise arise with theirs as we rest in the joy of your arriving presence. Amen.

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 11:15a *Of the Father's Love Begotten* Hayes

Lighting of the Advent Wreath *Bradley Wingate & Tim Judd*

* Call to Worship

Leader: On this day we bear witness to the light of Christ.
People: We bear witness with all the faithful of every time and place.

Leader: With Mary, the mother of Jesus, we rejoice,
People: for the Mighty One has done great things for us. How holy is God's name! Let us worship God!

* Hymn 104 "O Lord, How Shall I Meet You" VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN

* Prayer of Confession

Merciful God, we confess that, in the midst of your glorious creation, we have neglected our role in its care. We ignore the cries of the hurting and the lonely, those on the margins, and those who are oppressed. We focus on our own desires, while forgetting the needs of our neighbors. We have not prepared a way for the Lord, through either our words or our deeds, neither through our actions nor our thoughts. Grant us your mercy in forgiveness; and lead us to act with compassion and justice, guided by your glorious light. 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.

Hearing **God's Word**

LIGHT OF THE WORLD

by Mark Patterson

Presented by the Junior and Senior Choristers

"Light of the World" (Prologue)

"Jesus, Light of the World"

"Will You Be Ready?"

Junior Choristers

Soloists: *Margaret King, Ella Kate Maxwell, Bowen Mullins*

"Silent Night/Stille Nacht" (German carol)

"He Is Born/Il Est Né" (French carol)
 Quartet: Scarlett Gettys, Elle Maness, Francie Whitted, Ellie King

"Rise up, Shepherd, and Follow" (African-American spiritual)
 Soloist: Berkeley Blumer

"From a Distant Home" (Puerto Rican carol)
 Soloists: Maisie Lucas, Manning Dailey

"Take this Light"

"Jesus, Light of the World" (Reprise)

Responding to **God's Word**

Offering

Offertory *Wexford Carol* Hayes

* Doxology Hymn 108 "Of the Father's Love Begotten" DIVINUM MYSTERIUM

Stanza 6: **Christ, to thee with God the Father, and, O Holy Ghost, to thee, hymn and chant and high thanksgiving and unwearied praises be. Honor, glory, and dominion, and eternal victory, evermore and evermore! Amen.**

* Prayer of Dedication

* Hymn 113 "Angels We Have Heard on High" GLORIA

* Charge & Benediction

* Postlude Noël (Grand Jeu et Duo) D'aquin

*All who are able may stand

The Senior Choristers

Camille Benson
 Berkeley Blumer
 Virginia Boan
 Ellis Bryan

Anna Clark Cameron
 Gretchen Cleveland
 Mary Earle Cleveland
 Manning Dailey

Dottie Dulin
 Mary Eliza Duncan
 Scarlett Gettys
 Ella Heegard

McGhee Jackson
 Adeline Johnson
 Ellie King
 Mary Ellis Knapp

Elizabeth Land

Maisie Lucas
 Elle Maness
 Margaret McKinney
 Chandler Murphy

Lillie O'Neal
 Reynolds Paradise
 Mary Alice Price
 Mary-Frances Reynolds

Virginia Reynolds
 Lucy Stephens
 Miles Threatt
 Abby Wheaton

Francie Whitted
 Elizabeth Workman
 Mary Wayne Workman
 Mary Ellen Yeargin

The Junior Choristers

Paxton Brackett
 Price Cameron
 Marion Campbell
 Olive Clayton

Delaney Cox
 Jack Fountain
 Yates Gault
 Gantt Gettys

David Heegard
 Lucas Humphrey
 Margaret King
 Penny Knox

Sarah Margaret Land
 Ella Kate Maxwell

Sawyer Morris
 Bowen Mullins
 Patrick Murphy
 Grayson Norman

Maddie Papapieris
 Eleanor Parker
 Ansen Patel
 Shirley Bea Pitman

Thomas Price
 Marshall Reid
 Bo Smoak
 Beau Stephens

Evie Waldrep
 Thomas Whitted

Leading Worship **this Morning**

Lauren Slingerland, *preaching*

Ben Dorr, *liturgist*

Sam White (9a), *sponsor*

Paul Grier (9a), *scripture reader*

Todd Monsell, *organist/pianist*

Diana Dailey, *Junior Choristers director*

Hunter Smith, *Senior Choristers director*

Martha Gower, *Choristers accompanist*

The Chancel Choir (9a)

Rosemary Hughes (9a), *flute and soloist*

Kathi Hurst (9a), *soloist*

Jacob Barker, *head usher*

Roger Gower, George Howell, George McLarty,

Susan Grier, Stan Pendergrass (9a), *greeters*

Amy Hawkins, Will Edwards, Bill Holt,

Carrie Marguet, Zach Weaver (11:15a), *greeters*

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

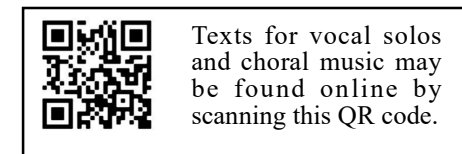
Each Sunday we offer worship bags in the Atrium for children. The worship bags are designed to include reusable items that engage children in open ended play during worship. While children attend worship with their families, they can participate in worship and play to make meaning in faith. Please return 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 at the 9a worship service, we welcome into our fellowship *Rose Noelle Saari*, daughter of David & Erin Saari.

In Memoriam

James Ronald Lawson
 (4/18/1940 - 12/6/2024)

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

ADVENT DOXOLOGY

Throughout the season of Advent we will sing the final stanza of "Of the Father's Love Begotten" as our Trinitarian Doxology following the offertory. This is one of many Doxology verses found in the hymnal. As with the lighting of the Advent candles, our singing of it helps us to mark this season as a time set apart, while also pointing us toward the first chapter of the Gospel of John – the final lesson read in our Lessons and Carols service on the Fourth Sunday of Advent.

2024 PLEDGE UPDATE

As of the end of November, we are over 91% through the year, and have received 83% of pledges made for 2024. Please check your quarterly giving statement to see where you stand with your 2024 giving. Thank you for your generosity with Westminster!

RETIREMENT GIVING

Make Qualified Distributions from your IRAs: Westminster members age 70.5 and older can support the church with a gift from their Individual Retirement Account. Qualified charitable distributions from IRAs may offer tax advantages while benefiting WPC's local and global ministries. Contact the church office for more information.

VOLUNTEER FOR PROJECT HOST

Please consider signing up to volunteer at Project Host in 2025. This is a great opportunity to serve our community with other members of Westminster. Four volunteers are needed every other Tuesday from 9a-1p. During this time, you will prepare a nutritious lunch, serve the patrons, and clean up after lunch service. Please sign up at <https://wpc-online.org/events-registration>. Contact Susan Clark at 864-982-4130 or susanhunterclark@gmail.com for more information.

HURRICANE HELENE RELIEF FUND

Westminster has established a Hurricane Helene Relief Fund. Our Witness & Service Committee will determine the most urgent needs through our partner agencies and decide how best to use the funds. If you would like to give to this fund, you may make a check to Westminster, and write "Hurricane Helene Relief Fund" in the memo line. Or you may give through our website. On the Westminster homepage (wpc-online.org), click the Give Today link. That redirects to the Give webpage. On this page, click the Make a Gift/Give Today link. Fill in the requested information, choosing "Hurricane Helene Relief Fund" from the "I am giving today..." dropdown menu. Continue to fill in the requested information, clicking Submit to finalize the transaction. Thank you for your generosity during this difficult time for so many in our Greenville community and our neighbors in North Carolina!

Advent & Christmas at Westminster

December 15
Third Sunday of Advent
9a Worship in the Sanctuary
11:15a Children's Musical in the Sanctuary

December 22
Fourth Sunday of Advent
The 64th Annual Service of Lessons & Carols
One Worship Service at 11:15a in the Sanctuary
Reception preceding service in Sanctuary Atrium

December 24
Candlelight Christmas Eve Worship
4p and 6p in the Sanctuary

December 29
One Worship Service
11:15a in the Sanctuary
Reception preceding service in Sanctuary Atrium

Our Vision:
*Open Minds
Open Hearts*

Our Pillars:
*Hospitality
Generosity
Justice
Imagination
Joy*

Our Goals:
*Connect
Serve
Grow*

**SUPPERS WITH SEVEN
JANUARY - MARCH 2025**




Sharing a meal is one of the best ways to establish and renew relationships with members of the Westminster church community. "Suppers With Seven" is seven (or so) persons - some couples, some singles, some older and some younger - gathering for a series of two or three meals at a time convenient to the group. To sign up, return this form to the church office, or fill out the online form on the church website by navigating to the Suppers With Seven page. The deadline to sign up is Monday, January 6.

Name(s): _____ (include both names, if a couple)
Phone: _____ (will be shared with your group)
Email Address: _____ (will be shared with your group)

Preferred Method of Contact: ___ email ___ phone call ___ text

Please check as many as apply:

- _____ I/We can host and lead the first gathering of Suppers with Seven.
- _____ I/We cannot host the first gathering but would consider a subsequent one.
- _____ I/We cannot host but would like to be part of a group.

   [wpcgreenville](http://wpcgreenville.com) | wpc-online.org | 2310 Augusta St.

THE HARBINGER
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Todd Monsell
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Lynn Bennett
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Michelle Little
Office Manager
michelle@wpc-online.org

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS
December 15-22, 2024**

Sunday, December 15
Third Sunday of Advent
8:15a Chancel Choir Rehearsal
9:00 Worship Service
10:00 Adult Sunday School with Connect, Serve, Grow Task Force
10:55 Sunday Session Meeting
11:15 Worship Service
12:30p Stated Session Meeting
12:45 Connections Group
4:30 Youth to Camelot Cinemas (youth to meet at the theater)

Monday, December 16
8:00p Narcotics Anonymous

Tuesday, December 17
12:00p AI-Anon Meeting

Wednesday, December 18
2:15p It's Elementary
4:30 Junior & Senior Choristers
5:00 It's Elementary Volunteer Christmas Celebration
7:00 Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, December 19
10:00a Bible Study
8:00p Narcotics Anonymous

Sunday, December 22
Fourth Sunday of Advent
10:00a Reception
10:55 Sunday Session Meeting
11:15 64th Annual Service of Lessons & Carols
4:00p Youth Choir/Senior Choristers Caroling and Cookies

POINSETTIA/ENDOWMENT/HERITAGE LECTURE MEMORIALS

Those who wish to remember loved ones during the Christmas Season may do so in three ways. Poinsettias for the sanctuary may be purchased for \$15.00 or you may give to either the Endowment or Heritage Lecture Funds. Poinsettias will decorate the sanctuary at the Lessons & Carols and Christmas Eve Services. Please fill out the slip below or contact the church office, 232-2424. Donors may pick up their poinsettias after the Christmas Eve Service you choose to attend. Orders must be placed by Sunday, December 15.

Donor _____

In Memory of _____

In Memory of _____

In Honor of _____

In Honor of _____

Poinsettias x \$15.00 = \$_____ Endowment:_____ Heritage Lecture: _____

the
HARBINGER
open minds open hearts

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From the Pews, Skip Gordon

Many of us have experienced inconveniences in our lives and thought "Oh Lord, why me? Not now." Sometimes it was just a little thing such as being in a traffic jam which makes you late for something important like an appointment. In this instance the comment is only momentary and does not develop into something more than a frustrating thought.

Unfortunately, sometimes the event generating the thought is life altering, like a death of a loved one, a divorce, a job loss, etc. These are serious life events and may also come at very inconvenient times in our lives. For me, it was being drafted into the Army part way through grad school. This led to getting to spend time in Vietnam late in the war when the country had already turned against this war. The potential for me was not only life changing but life ending.

Imagine what God must have been feeling while watching the Israelites turn from his teachings - covenant rebellion, idolatry, and injustice, to name a few. So, he sends Isaiah to warn his people about their behavior and gives his response to their behavior if it continues. He even foretells the exile to Babylon. Despite all this incorrect behavior, God does not abandon his covenant with his people. Isaiah reminds the Israelites that God is standing by his covenant that the desert will become green and there will be much song and joy if only the people change their ways.

We all have our individual ways of coping with important "Oh Lord, why me?" events in our lives. We concentrate on those worldly things that help us survive. Often God is left out of our efforts.

I must admit that most of my time in Vietnam was spent on just getting through the one year I had to spend there. Not much was spent on thanking God knowing that he still was loving and supporting me. During times of quiet contemplation, he broke through my everyday activity barriers. These comforting times were very important and helped me cope and survive.

So, as we confront our "Oh Lord why me?" times, remember God's promise to the Israelites and to each of us. He stands by his covenant and the desert will become green and there will be much song and joy.



Third Sunday of Advent

Preparation for **Worship**

God of good news, God of joy, your Spirit is always at work in our midst. Your nearness brings life and salvation. Help us join in the songs of our ancestors who have declared your mighty works through the generations. Let our praise arise with theirs as we rest in the joy of your arriving presence. Amen.

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.

Introit, Hymn 806 "I'll Praise My Maker" (Psalm 146) OLD 113TH

Lighting of the Advent Wreath *Steve & Amy Hopkins, Maddie*

* Call to Worship

Leader: On this day we bear witness to the light of Christ.

People: We bear witness with all the faithful of every time and place.

Leader: With Mary, the mother of Jesus, we rejoice,

People: for the Mighty One has done great things for us. How holy is God's name!

All: Let us worship God!

* Hymn 104 "O Lord, How Shall I Meet You" VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN

* Prayer of Confession

**Merciful God, we confess that,
in the midst of your glorious creation,
we have neglected our role in its care.**

**We ignore the cries of the hurting and the lonely,
those on the margins,
and those who are oppressed.**

**We focus on our own desires,
while forgetting the needs of our neighbors.**

**We have not prepared a way for the Lord,
through either our words or our deeds,
neither through our actions nor our thoughts.**

**Grant us your mercy in forgiveness;
and lead us to act with compassion and justice,
guided by your glorious light. 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.



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The Sacrament of Baptism 9a

Rose Noelle Saari

Congregational Response *Baptized in Water* BUNESSAN

Bap - tized in wa - ter, sealed by the Spir - it, marked with the
 sign of Christ our King; — born of the Spir - it, we are God's
 chil - dren; joy - ful - ly now God's prais - es we sing.

Hearing **God's Word**

Prayer for Illumination

Old Testament Lesson, *Isaiah 35:1-10*

Gospel Lesson, *Luke 1:46b-55*

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon "The Mystery of Advent Joy"

p. 578

p. 832

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.**

Call to Prayer, Hymn 294 "Within Our Darkest Night" DANS NOS OBSCURITÉS

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 *A New Magnificat* Jennings

* Doxology Hymn 108 "Of the Father's Love Begotten" DIVINUM MYSTERIUM

Stanza 6: **Christ, to thee with God the Father,
 and, O Holy Ghost, to thee,
 hymn and chant and high thanksgiving
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* Hymn 113 "Angels We Have Heard on High" GLORIA

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**All who are able may stand*

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