Sunday, September 6, 2026 |On Demand on YouTube|10a

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Preparation for Worship

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think I am following Your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please You does in fact please You. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that, if I do this, You will lead me by the right road, though I may know nothing about it. Therefore I will trust You always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for You are ever with me, and You will never leave me to face my perils alone. Amen.

Thomas Merton

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 — *Gavotte with Variations* — Depuis

* Call to Worship — 1 John 3:1-3

Leader: See what love the Father has given us,
that we should be called children of God.
People: And that is what we are!
Leader: Beloved, we are God's children now.
People: What we will be, has not yet been revealed.
Leader: When God is revealed, we will be like God.
People: And we will see God as he is.
All: Let us worship God!

* Hymn 686 — "God of Our Life" — Sandon

* Prayer of Confession

God of our lives,
we confess that we like to be the ones in control,
we plan meticulously; forecasting, anticipating,
and expecting at the cost of our presence in the moment.
We overlook the places we are needed right now,
where we can act compassionately, speak truthfully,
respond lovingly.
We try desperately to assign meaning
where meaning cannot be made,
and confine mysteries to what we can understand.
We make choices that demonstrate our power,
prowess, and influence.
We close ourselves off to the spontaneity of the Spirit.
Forgive us, God.
Help us to trust in you, who are beyond our understanding,
but not beyond our reach. 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

Hearing **God's Word**

Prayer for Illumination
First Scripture Lesson, *Psalm 46* — p. 450
Second Scripture Lesson, *Romans 8:18-25; 28-30* — p. 919

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

Sermon — "Is God in Control?"

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 — *All My Trials* — arr. Schram

* 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 772 — "Live Into Hope" — Truro

* Charge and Benediction

* Postlude — *Flourish* — Wagner

**All who are able may stand*

Leading Worship **this Morning**

Nick Carson, ***preaching***
Ben Dorr, ***liturgist***
Ingrid Erwin, ***scripture reader***
Rosemary Hughes, ***soloist***
Jacob Barker, ***head usher***
Judy O'Neal, Mason Donlan, Jennifer Shurley,
Amanda Warren, Mike Peters, ***greeters***
Andrew Heegard, David Heegard, ***acolytes***

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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.

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.

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, such as "Can War and Christian Faith be Reconciled?", or "What Is the Relationship Between Science, Miracles, and Faith?". Our question this Sunday is "Is God in Control?"

All Church Pancake Breakfast

Mark your calendars for our All Church Pancake Breakfast, provided by the Men of Westminster. Join us for a morning of delicious pancakes and fellowship on September 13 at 10a, as we kick off our fall worship schedule! Worship at 9a and 11:15a with pancakes in between. Sign up on the Harbinger Hub.

Baptism Class

If you would like to have your child baptized at Westminster, our next Baptism class is scheduled for Sunday, September 13 at 12:30p. Please notify the church office if you would like to attend, and we will be glad to send you the information for this class.

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.

Fall Worship and Sunday School:

Next Sunday, September 13, we will move to two worship services at 9a & 11:15a, with the Men of Westminster Pancake Breakfast at 10a in the Fellowship Hall. Sunday School for all ages will resume on Sunday, September 20, at 10a.

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.

Youth Choir Registration

Registration is now open for youth choir participants in grades 6-12. Weekly rehearsals will be held from 5:15-6p in the Choir Room, commencing on Sunday, September 13. Enroll by visiting the Harbinger Hub.

Youth Group Registration

Please register any 6th-12th grade youth who would like to be involved in WPCYG this year through the Harbinger Hub. This provides us with all the information we need to communicate with families, ensure safety, and prepare for your youth on Sunday nights! Registration is open to members and friends of WPC.

Blood Pressure Screenings

We are offering free blood pressure screenings once a month. Screenings will take place this Sunday, September 6, in the Friendship Court following the 10a worship service. If you have any questions or if you are a healthcare professional and would like to help, please contact Tim Miller at tmiller470@gmail.com.

Luncheon Group

The Luncheon Group will meet Wednesday, September 16, at 12:30p in Room 212. Leader: Mary Ann Cox (1maryanncox@gmail.com).

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.

Women of Westminster

Please join the Women of Westminster for our annual fall kick-off at the home of Anna Hanor (4 Parkins Lake Rd) on Thursday, September 17, at 6p. Make plans to join us for an evening of fellowship and fun.

Circle Meetings

Tuesday, September 8

- Circle 2. (7p) Contact Carrie Marguet (carriemarguet@gmail.com) or Misty Hardaway (mistyhardaway@gmail.com) for location. Circle 2 will be studying the book *Tending the Wild Garden* by Eugenia Anne Gamble.
- Circle 3, (2p) at the home of Joanne Sweeny (407 Wembley Rd). Circle Chair: Dee Malone (dee05m@gmail.com).
- Circle 7, (6p) at the home of Terri LeGrand (16 N. Brookwood Dr, 29605). Circle Chair: Josie Williams (jgwms318@gmail.com).

Wednesday, September 9

- Circle 6, (9a) at the home of Liz Einstein (223 Camille Ave). Circle Co-Chairs: Liz Einstein (liz.ard.einstein@gmail.com) and Sherry Tate (sherrytate63@gmail.com).

Sing with the Sanctuary Choir!

The Sanctuary Choir rehearses weekly on Wednesdays from 7-8:30p and assists in worship leadership each week at the 11:15a service. If you are interested in participating, please contact Marlon Hurst, Director of Music.

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).

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.

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS
September 6-13, 2026

Sunday, September 6
Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost
9:40 Weekly Session Meeting
10:00 Worship Service
11:00 Donut Reception
Blood Pressure Screenings
NO CHILDREN'S CHURCH, WPCYG, or YOUTH CHOIRS

Monday, September 7
Church Office Closed
Weekday School Closed
8:00 Narcotics Anonymous

Tuesday, September 8
10:00a Staff Meeting
12:00p Al-Anon
Gifts & Gratitude Committee Mtg.
2:00 Circle 3
6:00 Men of Westminster Executive Committee Mtg.
Circle 7
7:00 Circle 2

Wednesday, September 9
9:00a Circle 6
9:30 Weekday Chapel
2:30p It's Elementary
4:30 Jr & Sr Choristers
7:00 Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, September 10
10:00a Thursday Bible Study
11:30 Grief Writing Workshop
12:00p Finance Committee Mtg.
8:00 Narcotics Anonymous

Sunday, September 13
Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost
9:00a Worship Service
Witness & Service Committee Mtg.
10:00 Pancake Breakfast
10:55 Weekly Session Mtg.
11:15 Worship Service
K5 Bibles presented
12:30p Baptism Class
1:30 Capital Campaign Committee Mtg.
5:00 Youth Choir Rehearsals
6:00 Youth Dinner
6:30 Middler 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

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From the Pews, Brooke Culclasure

As I was pondering the topic of this reflection, I looked at the date and realized we were getting ready to move into September. As I tend to do when the month of September rolls around, my mind goes to the September 11th terrorist attacks and I do some quick math to remind myself of how long it's been since that terrible day. After I did the math this time, even though I know I must have read or heard on the news about the 25th anniversary, I was incredulous and it hit hard to realize that's it been a quarter of a century since that day.

I was seven months pregnant with my second son on that day, working at a college in Lynchburg, Virginia while my one-year-old son was cared for by my sister. The news quickly filtered down to the Dean of Students Offices and we were soon inundated with students who had no other place to go and needed a place to help process what was happening, especially the handful of students with family members directly impacted. Even though I knew I needed to stay, part of me really just wanted to leave immediately and get my baby and hide away with my family. While I was not at the horrible scenes of the attacks, there were scary and overwhelming feelings of chaos among us all and the feeling that the world was out of control and falling apart. If I felt that way in Lynchburg, relatively far away from the tragedy, I can't even truly fathom how those felt in the middle of everything.

Moving to our scripture this week—Psalm 46 and its promise that God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in times of chaos or trouble. When I hear Psalm 46 in this context, it is honestly difficult to think about and fully consider. As I have read and heard from testimonials of both survivors of the attacks and family members of those who were lost, there certainly was and is still solace in faith (faith of all types) and that faith gave people strength both in the face of death or dealing with the loss of a loved one. But still...this is always hard for me to wrap my head around when I think about the scale of the 9-11 tragedy. I can understand why some might have thought God was not there for them that day.

Similar thoughts sometimes come to me in present day when I see large-scale tragedies such as the war in Ukraine and the very recent floods in Nepal. I still have to work through trying to understand. But I do truly know the promise of Psalm 46 is still there, even if it's hard to see...and that when the things become uncertain or difficult or chaotic, God remains and is still there.