

THE SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 17, 2023

ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S NAME

Gathering Music – *Trumpet Tune in F* Noel Rawsthorne

Prayer of Preparation (*you may prepare for worship by praying silently*)

God, our source and our salvation, in love you made us and by love you have redeemed us. Make your love for us bear fruit in our forgiveness of others, that in this life we may know your all-embracing compassion and in the world to come receive the everlasting joy of fellowship you share with your Son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Chiming of the Hour

Greeting and Announcements Durwood Blackwell

Call to Worship (responsive)

Christ Jesus is Lord of the dead and the living.

Whether we live or die, we belong to God.

Here we stand before the Lord of all life.

Let every knee bow, and every tongue sing praise.

Let us worship God.

* Hymn of Praise 305 – *Come Sing, O Church, in Joy!*

* Call to Confession

Who are we to judge one another? We all stand before the judgment of God. Trusting in God's grace, let us confess our sin.

* Prayer of Confession (unison)

God our redeemer, we confess that we remain captivated by sin. You move heaven and earth to save us, but we are unmoved by the suffering of others. You are willing to forgive again and again, but we are unwilling to forgive the debts of others. Forgive us; liberate us! Let us be no longer bound by sin, but released, restored, set free to worship and serve you in freedom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. (time for silent confession)

* Declaration of Forgiveness (responsive)

We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. We belong to Christ, the Lord of the dead and the living. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! **Thanks be to God.**

* The Congregation's Response: *Gloria Patri* Hymn 581

**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.**

PROCLAIM GOD'S WORD

Time with Children Dylan McDaniel & Meredith Suttle

Prayer for Illumination

God of compassion, your word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. Open our hearts and minds to hear your voice, source of truth and beauty, in the scripture read and proclaimed, in music and silence, in prayer and action. Amen.

First Reading – Romans 14:1-12 pew Bible pg. 923

The Word of the LORD. **Thanks be to God!**

Anthem – *Through Many Dangers* Gwyneth Walker

Through many dangers, toils and snares, I have already come;
Your grace has brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
O Lord you have promised good to me. Your Word my hope secures;
You will my guard and comfort be as long as life endures.
O when my beating heart shall fail, and all my life shall cease,
I still shall have within Your veil, a life of joy and peace.
The earth shall soon dissolve like snow, the sun shall cease to shine;
But God who called me here below, shall be forever mine.
When we've been there ten thousand years, and we are bright shining as the sun.
We've no less days to sing God's praise than when we'd first begun.
And we are bright shining as the sun.
How sweet the sound that saved a soul like me! For once I was lost,
But now I am found. For once I was blind, but now I can see, for once I was lost,
But now I am found. Grace. Grace. Amazing!

Second Reading – Matthew 18:21-35 pew Bible pg. 800

The Word of the LORD. **Thanks be to God!**

Sermon – *How Often Should I Forgive?* Rev. Dr. Christopher Croftwell

GIVE THANKS TO GOD

* Hymn of Thanksgiving 444 – *Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive*

* Affirmation of Faith: (responsive)

Adapted from *A Brief Statement of Faith*

We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God: preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed and blessing the children, healing the sick and binding up the brokenhearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners and calling all to repent and believe the gospel. Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition, Jesus was crucified suffering the depths of human pain and giving life for the sins of the world. God raised this Jesus from the dead, vindicating his sinless life, breaking the power of sin and evil, delivering us from death to life eternal. With believers in every time and place, we rejoice that nothing in life or in death can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Prayers of the People (responsive)

With one mind in Christ, and one heart in the Spirit, let us pray to the Lord of heaven and earth.

In the name of Jesus, we pray for the church . . . Let us live as new and holy people, delivered from sin and death by the grace of Christ through the waters of our baptism. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In the name of Jesus, we pray for the earth . . . Stretch out your hand to stop the rising waters; lead us away from death and destruction into the land of promise you provide. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In the name of Jesus, we pray for all nations . . . Lead all peoples, by the light of your presence, to walk in freedom, to work for justice, to seek your purpose, and to live in peace. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In the name of Jesus, we pray for this community . . . Allow us to learn from our sisters and brothers, respecting different patterns and practices of life, doing everything to your honor and glory. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In the name of Jesus, we pray for loved ones . . . Bless those for whom we pray: heal their diseases, deliver them from trouble, renew their strength, and satisfy them with goodness as long as they live. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Enable us, O God, by the power of your Spirit, to live our lives in a way that is worthy of the gospel, to the glory of the name that is above all names, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer (unison)

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.

Invitation to Offering

I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to present yourselves as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God.

Offertory – *Adagio Cantabile*

Johann Rinck

* The Doxology – Hymn 606

* Prayer of Dedication (unison)

Bountiful God, you give without measure. May our giving reflect your generosity; may our lives overflow with your deep love. Use our lives and the gifts we bring today to share your blessing throughout the earth. Amen.

GO IN GOD'S NAME

* Hymn of Consecration 649 – *Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound*

* Blessing and Charge (responsive)

The Lord bless you and keep you in your going out and in your coming from this time on and forevermore. **Amen.**

Be watchful, stand firm in your faith, be courageous and strong. Let all that you do be done in love. **Amen.**

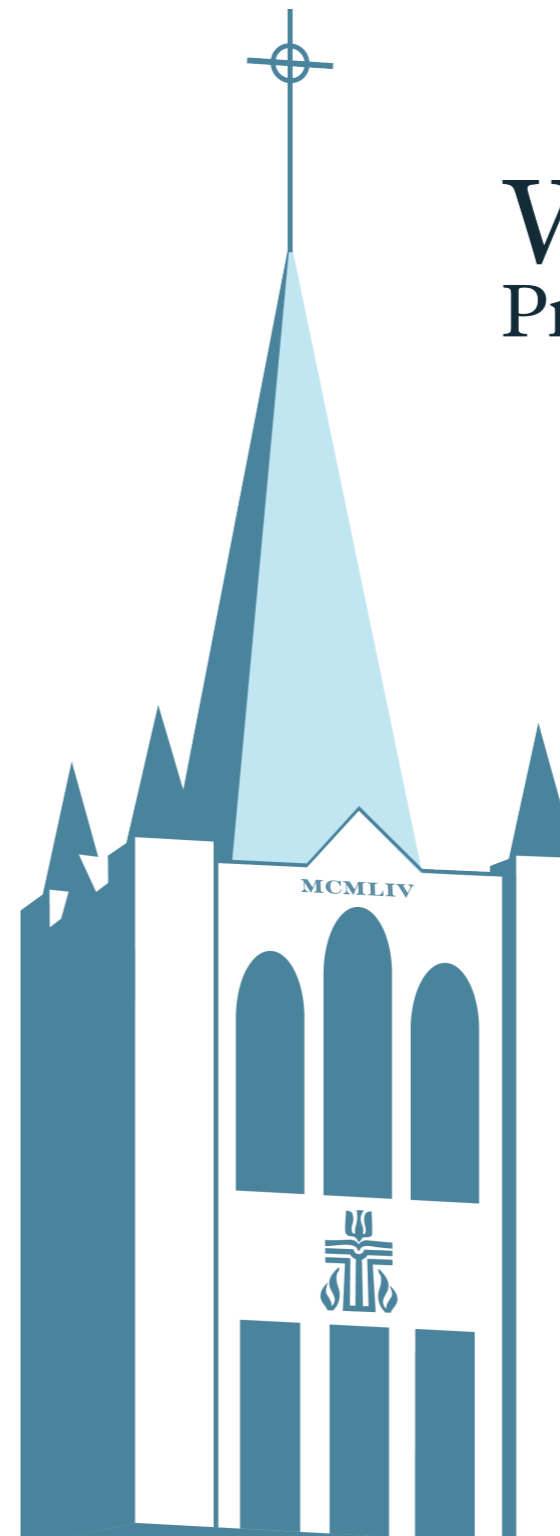
* Postlude – *Toccata on Amazing Grace*

J. Christopher Pardini



* Please stand at the * as you are able. Unison readings are **printed in bold.**

The liturgy for this service was drawn from the *Book of Common Worship* (2018) and *Call to Worship Lectionary Aids for 2013-2014, 2017-2018, Year A.*



Westminster Presbyterian Church

“So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation—everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!”

II Corinthians 5:17

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PRAYERS FOR HEALING AND STRENGTH

(* new added prayers)

Linda Basden, neighbor of Janeil Harris – Alzheimer's

Telina Birch, friend of Nancy Johnson – receiving cancer treatment

Jan Bozeman

**Margaret Breland, friend of Jan Bozeman – severe back pain*

Janet Burke

Vida Davis, sister of Ruthie Davis – dementia

Bill and Louise Edwards, friends of Charles Brown – Bill has cancer and

Louise is in poor health and taking care of Bill

Larry Fontana, friend of Nancy Johnson – mantle cell lymphoma of the throat

Teresa Ginn, Michael Ginn's aunt – dementia

**Wendy Graham, Jan Bozeman's sister – pneumonia*

Kenny Harrell

Jeanne Herring – prayers for endurance and strength

Eddie James, friend of Pam and Sammy Dossett – work related injury,

in ICU and is intubated, serious condition

Ann Johnson

Geraldine Jones

Roger Kuyrkendall, Carrie Creel's father – dementia

B.J. Lambert – prayers for endurance and strength

**Kristy Lochhead's neighbor, Winslow – drowned in Lake Michigan*

Bernice McIntosh, Mac Forsyth's aunt – declining health

Wanda Matthews, Dudley Westbrook's mother – deteriorating health

Becky Nobles, Glenn Nobles' sister-in-law – esophagus cancer

Laura Pearce, Nancy Johnson's goddaughter – constant nerve/ankle pain management

Fergus Reid, Carolyn McLarnan's nephew – severe pain

Kem Reid, Ryan Reid's father – at home recovering

Sheema Reid, Carolyn McLarnan's sister-in-law – starting chemo

Dena Faye Robertson, Glenn Nobles' sister – hospice for Alzheimer's

Jeannette Russell, Janet Burke's twin sister – serious health issues

Avril Sword, secretary at Parkway Heights – serious car accident

Molly Tracy, friend of Ann Aldridge's daughter – throat cancer

Louise Traxler, Karen Reidenbach's mom – transitioning to long-term care

John Watkins, Rose Marie Yore's brother – prayers for healing

**Sandra Young, mother of a friend of Carolyn McLarnan – on hospice*

Greeting and Announcements

Welcome to Westminster! We're very glad to see you in worship. We hope you will sense Christ's presence. If you are looking for a place to grow and serve, we'd love to tell you more about us. Please silence cell phones during the worship hour.

The session will meet today at 11:35 a.m.

Intergenerational Cook-Out is today at Tommy Suttle's house (59 Moss Lane, Petal) from 4:00–6:00 p.m. Carpool from the church at 3:30 p.m. Meat and drinks will be provided. Please bring a side dish or dessert to share. The pool is ready, so bring your swimsuit and towel.

PW Prayer Ministry will meet on Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. There are prayer cards on the back of the pews for prayer requests. Please provide an address so a card can be sent and place with the offering.

Brown Bag will meet Tuesday at 11:00 a.m.



Please join us for Wednesday night dinner this week at 5:30. There is no charge for the meal, but donations are encouraged. We need a headcount, so please place a reservation slip in the offering plate or call the office.

Adults—Greek pasta and beef, mixed vegetables, green salad, rolls, and dessert. Children—menu available

Activities—Good old-fashioned Hymn Sing! Led by Althea and Kay. It's been a while since we've done this, so pick your favorite hymns and meet us in the sanctuary after supper.

Chancel Choir will meet at 6:30.

Men of the Church will meet Thursday at Loblolly Bakery on Hardy Street at 7 a.m. for breakfast. Come join them for a time of food and fellowship.

On Sunday mornings at 9:30, in Montague Hall, the Seekers Sunday school class will be “going through the wardrobe” to embark on an 11-week journey through the Chronicles of Narnia by C.S. Lewis. Each week we will be discussing one of the seven books in the Chronicles (beginning with *The Magician's Nephew*) and looking for the Biblical parallels in each story. Along the way, we will also have some fun viewing clips from the movies that were made from three of the books. Whether it's your first-time exploring Narnia, or your hundredth time, *everyone* is invited to take part in this Bible study. The youth and children have been busy making snack bags with an inspirational message and/or picture for the cancer center patients. There are some examples on the table by the stairs in the narthex.

Nursery Announcement

Due to insurance/liability concerns, we will begin enforcing our nursery policy for children ages birth to 5 years. Children ages six and up will be invited to stay in the sanctuary during worship. Age-appropriate worship activity bags are available for children in the narthex.

Thank you for your understanding!