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**WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

*Service of Worship*

*May 21, 2023*

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**You Are Welcome Here:**

We are glad you are worshipping with us today. Westminster is a welcoming and inclusive community seeking to grow in faith and understanding and to show God’s love to those among us and those around us. We pray you experience our joyful welcome and God’s peaceful presence as you worship with us today.

Questions about Westminster? Just ask! Any one of us would be glad to help.

**Children at Westminster:**

Children are an important part of our worshipping community. Children’s Sunday School starts in the Sanctuary. It is here that the children learn our rhythms of worship and become knit into our fellowship. It is here that we have a chance to learn from them just as surely as they have a chance to learn from us. After the “Time with All God’s Children”, children may depart with our caregivers and teachers for Children’s Sunday School or remain with their parents for worship. If this is your first visit to Westminster, you are welcome to accompany your child to Children’s Sunday School so that you can meet our caregivers and help settle your child in.

**Westminster Presbyterian Church**

**A Service for the Worship of God**

*Ascension Sunday*

May 21, 2023

We Gather in God’s Word

**Chiming the Hour**

**Prelude**

**Words of Scripture**Psalm 47:1,5

Clap your hands, all you peoples!

**God has gone up with a shout of joy.**

**Welcome and Announcements**

**\*Call to Worship**

Shout for joy, sings songs of praise,

**For God reigns over all the earth!**

**\*Hymn #150“Come, Christians, Join to Sing”** Madrid

*Come, Christians, join to sing  
Alleluia! Amen!  
Loud praise to Christ our King;  
Alleluia! Amen!  
Let all, with heart and voice,  
Before His throne rejoice;  
Praise is His gracious choice:  
Alleluia! Amen!*

*Come, lift your hearts on high;  
Alleluia! Amen!  
Let praises fill the sky;  
Alleluia! Amen!  
He is our guide and friend;  
To us He'll condescend;  
His love shall never end;  
Alleluia! Amen!*

*Praise yet our Christ again;  
Alleluia! Amen!  
Life shall not end the strain;  
Alleluia! Amen!  
On heaven’s blissful shore,  
His goodness we’ll adore,  
Singing forevermore,  
"Alleluia! Amen!"*

**Call to Confession**

**Prayer of Confession**

**Almighty God, you have raised Jesus from death to life, and crowned him Lord of all. We confess that we have not bowed before him, or acknowledged his rule in our lives. We have gone along with the ways of the world, and failed to give him glory.**

*We pause for personal prayer.*

**Forgive us, and raise us from sin, that we may be your faithful people,**

**obeying the commands of our Lord Jesus Christ, who rules the world**

**and is head of the church, his body. Amen.**

**Assurance of Pardon**

**\*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.***

**\*Passing the Peace**

The peace of Christ be with you.

**And also with you.**

We Hear God’s Word

**Time for All God’s Children**

***This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine.***

***This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine.***

***This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine,***

***Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!***

**\*Hymn #108“Christ is Alive!”**Truro

*Christ is alive! Let Christians sing.  
The cross stands empty to the sky.  
Let streets and homes with praises ring.  
Love, drowned in death, shall never die.  
  
Christ is alive! No longer bound  
to distant years in Palestine,  
but saving, healing, here and now,  
and touching every place and time.  
  
In every insult, rift, and war  
where color, scorn, or wealth divide,  
Christ suffers still, yet loves the more,  
and lives, where even hope has died.  
  
Women and men, in age and youth,  
can feel the Spirit, hear the call,  
and find the way, the life, the truth,  
revealed in Jesus, freed for all.*

*Christ is alive, and comes to bring  
good news to this and every age,  
till earth and sky and ocean ring  
with joy, with justice, love, and praise.*

**Prayer of Illumination**

**Epistle Reading**Ephesians 1:15-23

**15**I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason **16**I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers, **17**that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, **18**so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may perceive what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, **19**and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. **20**God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, **21**far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. **22**And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, **23**which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

This is the Word of the LORD.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Mediation**Caroline Dennis

*“Commencement”*

**Old Testament Reading**Isaiah 30:21

**21**And when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left, your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, “This is the way; walk in it.”

This is the Word of the LORD.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Meditation**Arthur Gillespie

*“The Path You Follow”*

**Gospel Reading**John 15:12-17

**12**“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. **13**No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. **14**You are my friends if you do what I command you. **15**I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing, but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. **16**You did not choose me, but I chose you. 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. **17**I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

This is the Word of the LORD.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Meditation**Jacob Dennis

*“Rationality in the Church”*

We Respond to God’s Word

**Prayers of the People and 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.**

**Call to Offering**

**Offertory**

**\*Doxology**

***Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow, Praise Him, all creatures here below.***

***Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.***

**\*Prayer of Thanksgiving**

**\*Confession of Faith**Psalm 139:7-18

Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence?

**If I ascend to heaven, you are there.**

**If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.**

**If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,**

**even there your right hand shall hold me fast.**

If I say, “Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light around me become dark as night,” even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day, for darkness is as light to you.

**It was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother’s womb.**

**I praise you for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes beheld my unformed substance. In your book were written all the days that were formed for me, when none of them yet existed.**

**How weighty are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! I try to count them – they are more than the sand; I come to the end – I am still with you.**

**\*Hymn #418** Ich Halte Treulich Still

**“God, Bless Your Church with Strength!”**

*God, bless Your Church with strength!*

*Wherever we may be,*

*Upbuild Your servants as we work*

*In common ministry.*

*Urge us from fledgling faith*

*To venture and to soar*

*Through open skies, to sing the praise*

*Of Christ whom we adore.*

*God, bless Your Church with life!*

*May all our branches thrive,*

*Unblemished, wholesome, bearing fruit,*

*Abundantly alive.*

*From You, one holy vine,*

*In freedom may we grow;*

*Sustain us in our mission, Lord,*

*Your love and peace to show.*

*God, bless Your Church with hope!*

*Despite chaotic days,*

*May we in chaos shine to light*

*A pathway through life’s maze.*

*May justice be our aim,*

*And kindness ours to share,*

*In humbleness O may we walk,*

*Assured our God is there!*

**Charge and Benediction**

**Postlude**

[\*All stand as they are able.]

*The sanctuary flowers this Sunday are given by Arthur and Kathy Gillespie*

*in honor of Jacob Dennis, a senior graduating from Emerald High School.*

**Serving Today at Westminster**

Organ: Larry Dozier

Vocalist: Liz Watkins

Worship Host: The Watkins Family

Tech Team: Steve Kuhl and Bill Kimler

Adult Sunday School: Caroline Dennis

Children’s Sunday School: Kathleen Watkins and Denise Waldrep

Today, guest meditations are offered by Jacob Dennis and Arthur Gillespie. Jacob will graduate from Emerald High School and plans to study mechanical engineering at the University of South Carolina. Arthur is Jacob’s confirmation mentor.

**Today at Westminster**

Adult Sunday School 9:00 am Choir Room

Worship 10:00 am Sanctuary

Children’s Sunday School 10:00 am Sanctuary and Children’s Wing

Sunday Sustenance 11:15 am Fellowship Hall

Stated Session Meeting 12:30 pm Parlor

**This Week at Westminster**

Office Hours: 9:00 – 1:00 M-Th

Books & Brown Bags 6:00 – 7:30 Wednesday Fellowship Hall

Emerald High School 6:00 – 8:00 Wednesday Fellowship Hall

Band Banquet

**Next Sunday, May 28**

10:00 Worship on the Water (WOW!)

*Reminder: The church office will be closed on Monday, May 29*

*in observance of the Memorial Day Holiday*

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Sunday Sustenance: Food for Mind, Body and Soul**

Join us after worship TODAY for lunch in Fellowship Hall. We will celebrate our graduating senior and hear a presentation from Hanna Kemmer, Prevention Specialist at Meg’s House, one of our partners in mission. This promises to be a wonderful time of fellowship, celebration, and learning.

**Summer Schedule Begins NEXT Sunday!**

Please take special note of our summer worship schedule included as an insert in your bulletin. NEXT Sunday, we will all worship at WOW (Worship on the Water) at Camp Fellowship. Reverend Kevin Cartee will be our preacher. Our Pastor, Caroline Dennis will be the preacher at the close of the WOW season on Labor Day weekend. Worship opportunities continue throughout the summer BOTH at Camp Fellowship and at our Cokesbury Campus. See the bulletin insert for details.

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There are many ways to contribute to our life together at Westminster.  If you are looking for a place to serve, our pastor, Caroline, or any of our elders would love to talk with you to see where your passions and skills intersect with the work of our church family here at church or in our community. Financial contributions can be made by check or cash placed in the offering plate here at church.  There are envelopes in the pews.  Checks can also be mailed into the church office.  No checkbook?  No worries!  Tithes and offerings can also be made through Tithe.ly, our online giving app which you can find by using this QR code or going to our website at <https://www.wpcgnwd.org/giving>.

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| Logo  Description automatically generated**WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  *An Inclusive Community of Faith*  *United by Our Belief in and Commitment to Jesus Christ*  Office Hours: M-Th 9:00 a.m. – Noon Office Phone: 864.229.3595  www.wpcgnwd.org wpcgwd1@gmail.com | | |
| Clerk of Session | Treasurer | Office Manager |
| Steve Kuhl | Len Bornemann | Charleston Warner |
|  |  |  |
|  | **RULING ELDERS** |  |
| Class of 2023 | Class of 2024 | Class of 2025 |
| David Hammond | Kathy Nave Felder | Tina Corley |
| Richard Wilson | Claire Kuhl | Rob Graves |
|  | | |
| **Rev. Caroline Vinson Dennis, pastor** | | |
| 317.777.1487 | | |
| ***Sunday Study 9:00 a.m. Church Service: 10:00 a.m.*** | | |
| CCLI License #2724601 and #20189191 | | |