

THE SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

Fourth Sunday of Easter

April 26, 2026

ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S NAME

Gathering Music – *Tuba Tune in D Major*

Craig Seller Lang

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

God our Shepherd, you are our safe place, our shelter, our ground, our breath. We turn to you in hope and trust, knowing we have come this far by faith, and you will guide us all the way. Mold our daily patterns for your purposes so that we may live as one heart and mind with you and our neighbors, rejoicing together and praising your holy name, through Jesus the Christ. Amen.

Chiming of the Hour

Greeting and Announcements

Durwood Blackwell

Call to Worship (responsive)

We have been through much, but the Lord has been with us, and so we find peace and give thanks.

The Lord is our shepherd; we have everything we need.

Through shadow and light, through death and birth, through grief and joy, we have never been alone. We rest in that truth.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our lives, and we shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Let us worship God.

* Hymn of Praise 244 – *This Joyful Eastertide*

* Call to Confession

Christ is the good shepherd, who leads us to safety and peace no matter what we have done. Christ's voice calls us to repent and return; let us heed that voice and go to God in prayer.

* Prayer of Confession (unison)

God of community, you call us to a world radically different from what we are used to. You ask us to lay aside our ideas of "mine" and "yours." You show us a life where goods are shared, where all are loved, and faithfulness is shown through generosity. But we cling to our possessions, trusting them more than we trust you. Forgive us, merciful God. Help us to truly believe in your just and peaceful realm and to work to make it so.

(time for silent confession)

* Declaration of Forgiveness (responsive)

Christ himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds we have been healed.

For we were going astray like sheep, but now we have returned to the shepherd and guardian of our souls. 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

Alicia Westbrook

Prayer for Illumination

Living God, with joy we celebrate the presence of your risen Word. Enliven our hearts by your Holy Spirit so that we may proclaim the good news of eternal and abundant life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

First Reading – Psalm 23

Pew Bible pg. 435

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

Anthem – *Open My Eyes*

K. Lee Scott

Open my eyes and I shall see; incline my heart and I shall desire;
order my steps and I shall walk in the ways of your commandments. (repeat)

O God, be my only Lord, and beside you let there be none else,
no other, none else with you.

Teach me to worship you and serve you in all my undertakings
with truth of spirit, with honor of body, with blessing of mouth,
with blessing of mouth both in public and private.

Open my eyes and I shall see; incline my heart and I shall desire;
order my steps and I shall walk in the ways of your commandments. Amen

Second Reading – John 10:11-18

Pew Bible pg. 872

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

Sermon – *The Good Shepherd*

Rev. Dr. Christopher Crotwell

GIVE THANKS TO GOD

* Hymn of Thanksgiving 802 – *The King of Love*

* Affirmation of Faith: Adapted from The Confession of 1967, 9.22 (unison)

New life in Christ takes shape in a community in which people know that God loves and accepts them in spite of what they are. They therefore accept themselves and love others, knowing that no one has any ground on which to stand, except God's grace.

Prayers of the People (responsive)

We offer our prayers through Christ, who lives and reigns forever, and prays for us in heaven. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Through Christ, we pray for the church . . . Help us to follow Christ more faithfully, heeding the voice of our good shepherd and inviting others to enter into him. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Through Christ, we pray for the earth . . . Restore green pastures and still waters; drive away death and lead us in right paths, for the sake of the world you so love. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Through Christ, we pray for all nations . . . Increase goodwill among all peoples. Show us what we have in common and give us a shared vision of abundant life. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Through Christ, we pray for this community . . . Give us glad and generous hearts, sharing our faith, our bread, and our possessions with all who are hungry for your grace. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Through Christ, we pray for loved ones . . . Shelter all who are threatened and abused, give peace to those who are suffering, and comfort those who are in pain. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of all power and glory, receive these prayers, and continue your mighty work among us, through Jesus Christ, our living 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

How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods yet refuses to help a sister or brother in need? Remembering God's great love for the world, let us offer our lives to the Lord.

Offertory – *Little Flock*

Mark Sedio

* The Doxology – Hymn 606

* Prayer of Dedication (unison)

Great God, to you we give our thanks; your steadfast love endures forever. With gratitude we bring our gifts to you. Bless us and our gifts, that our lives and our resources may be a source of healing and hope, of joy and justice in our world. Amen.

GO IN GOD'S NAME

* Hymn of Consecration 803 – *My Shepherd Will Supply*

* Blessing and Charge (responsive)

May the love of the holy triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—abide with you forever. **Alleluia!**

Now go forth in Jesus' name, remembering his new commandment to love one another, just as he has loved us. **Amen.**

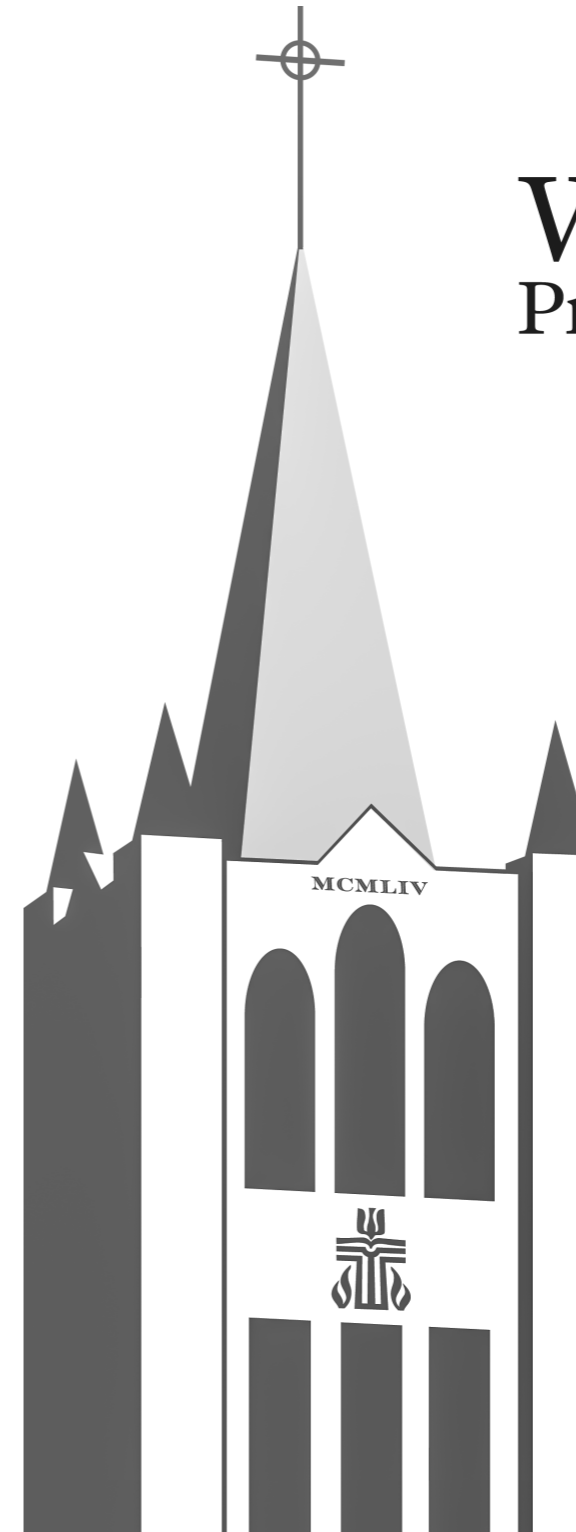
* Postlude – *Alla Hornpipe*

George Frederick Handel



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

Today's liturgy is in part adapted from the Call to Worship website, a resource created by the PCUSA's Office of Theology and Worship and the Presbyterian Association of Musicians.



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

115 N. 25th Ave. Hattiesburg, MS 39401
westminster@wpchattiesburg.com
facebook.com/westminsterhattiesburg1954
www.westminster-hattiesburg.com
(601) 584-7574

PRAYERS FOR HEALING AND STRENGTH

(* new added prayers)

Janet Baldwin – family issues

Linda Basden, neighbor of Janeil Harris – Alzheimer's

Jan Bozeman – constant pain

Dutchie Bryant – recovering from a fall

Larry & Margaret Burge of Poplarville, friend of Michael Yore – Larry has cancer

Laura Pearce Cureton, Nancy Johnson's goddaughter – nerve block therapy continues

**Malcolm Curtis, Janet Baldwin's co-worker – health issues*

Deidra Dickenson, Kathy Cain's sister – onset of dementia

Cathy Dudley – Bedford Care (Medical Blvd)

Bill and Louise Edwards, friends of Charles Brown, strength and endurance

Erica Gilmore, friend of Janet Baldwin – family issues

Teresa Ginn, Michael Ginn's aunt – dementia

Jim Harris, Dixie Coats' brother-in-law's father – in the hospital with serious health issues

Mckenna Hawkins, daughter of Michael Yore's friend, cancer

Charles "Rocky" Hartfield, friend of Pam Love – health issues

Peggy Henry, Karen Reidenbach's sister, continued strength through addiction recovery

Charlotte Hill

Ann Johnson

**J T Johnson – recovery from medical procedures*

Geraldine Jones

B.J. Lambert

Deloris McLaurin, Glenn Nobles' first cousin – dementia

Anita Murphy, friend of Mary Cromartie – lung cancer

Glenn Nobles – endurance and strength

Renee Parker, friend of Ruthie Davis – macular degeneration

Carolyn Mitchell Pintard, Betty Mitchell's daughter – grave health issues

**Sheema Reid, Carolyn McLarnan's sister-in-law – lymph nodes issues*

Laura Todd, Grayson Rayborn's cousin – multiple health issues

Louise Traxler, Karen Reidenbach's mom – Bedford Care (Medical Blvd)

Jerry Spann, friend of Ruthie Davis – cancer

Korie Turner, friend of Ruthie Davis – prayers for courage

Ella Young, sister of Janet Baldwin – struggling with dementia



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 May/June Today devotionals are on the narthex cabinet.

Youth Kickball Fundraiser is today at 4:30.

Brown Bag Bible Study will meet on Tues. at 11:00 a.m.

No Wednesday night supper or activity.

Chancel Choir will meet at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday.

Men of the Church will meet on Thursday at 7:00 a.m. at Loblolly Bakery.



To donate to WPC online, scan the QR code and follow the instructions.

May 10 is Youth Sunday. Please support our youth. They are working hard planning the service. This is a great time for us to see the talents of our youth.

KICKBALL FUNDRAISER for the Youth
The deacons and elders will face off in a good old-fashioned kickball match today at 4:30 p.m. Grab your lawn chairs and come enjoy a meal and watch the game.

Dessert and Casserole Auction is on Wednesday, May 6. The money raised goes to summer trips. A meal will be provided.



Articles for the May newsletter are due to Wes by noon Thursday, April 30 at noon.

wes@breadproject.com

The session has called for a **congregational meeting** on May 3. The purpose of the meeting will be to hear a report from the church officer nominating committee and to elect new officers for the class of 2029.

The Paul Andersen Memorial
AGO Organ Recital
April 26, 2023, 3 p.m.
Westminster Presbyterian Church

Jackson Creel, Pamela Fuller, Kay Guiles
Kenny Myrick, Peyton Parker, Doug Rust
Kathy Vail, Matt Woods

