Friends and fellow disciples,

The church is in decline. That’s the narrative, at least, and there are all sorts of numbers to back it up. Attendance is decreasing. Membership, too. Even belief is dropping fairly dramatically, according to a recent survey by the Pew Research Center: [www.pewrsr.ch/1J1aMP1](http://www.pewrsr.ch/1J1aMP1).

Pew found the number of Americans who describe themselves as Christian dropped almost 8 percentage points, from 78.4 percent in 2007 to 70.6 percent last year. During the same seven-year period, those who describe themselves as atheist, agnostic, or “nothing in particular” increased from 16.1 percent to 22.8 percent. “These changes,” they write, “are taking place across the religious landscape, affecting all regions of the country and many demographic groups. While the drop in Christian affiliation is particularly pronounced among young adults, it is occurring among…all ages. The same trends are seen among whites, blacks, and Latinos; among both college graduates and adults with only a high school education; and among women as well as men.”

But I believe the church remains as important as ever.

I think we’ve seen it in recent months in Baltimore and Charleston. In Baltimore, when a community crisis – in the tragic nexus of poverty, opportunity, race, crime, and policing – became violent, it was the church that stepped in. The leadership of a number of local churches banded together to sing and pray, and to walk the streets, day after day, listening to residents, coordinating with political leaders. Some of them quite literally stood in a line between protestors and the police, living out their discipleship by trying to keep people safe and calm the community.

In Charleston, after a terrifying attack, the members of Emanuel AME and other local churches led us. They offered forgiveness to their attacker at the preliminary hearing, they reached out for understanding, they showed us something about grace. I believe that their leadership helped keep a community that could have exploded with anger (like so many have across our land in recent months) calm. They are helping us see what we can learn, and who God is calling us to be.

Maybe some churches are shrinking. Maybe fewer people are attending most churches on Sunday mornings. But a church that worships with joy, that is deeply engaged in its community, that seeks to live out its faith in its relationships with each other and with its neighbors, is always going to have a crucial role in all of our communities – a mighty task, to be sure, but one this church has always been ready to embrace.

Chris

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**Snacks for Montreat**

Homemade baked goods/snacks for meal-time desserts and back-home group snacks are needed for the senior highs attending the Montreat Youth Conference.

If you would like to make a batch of your favorite (easy-to-transport) brownies, cookies, or snack mix, we’d love to give the youth a taste of home while they are away. (There are some gluten-free WPC youth, so those recipes are always appreciated!)

Donations can be placed in the green collection bin in the Mission Center by Sunday, July 19.
Concerns & Celebrations

Please remember the following in your prayers this week.

The death of Chuck Byrd’s uncle
The death of Ken Diehl’s mother
Marge Enberg’s sister
Judy Lamon’s friend
Rick Jenkins
Kuno Juergenson
Diane Kelly’s brother
The Meyen and Perry families’ friends’ son

John Penick
Paul Ransford
Cathy Reinhardt’s uncle
Patrick Reinhardt
Eric Wolf
The death of Rachel Woolard
Vivian Young’s father

Volunteer Opportunities & More at Westminster and Beyond

Presbytery Meeting Support

Westminster is part of The Presbytery of New Hope, which represents all PC(USA) congregations from Efland to the Outer Banks. The Presbytery’s next meeting will be held Tuesday, July 28, at Covenant Presbyterian Church right here in Durham. Westminster needs volunteers to help with the event!

Breakfast Donations & Servers

Westminster is providing breakfast for the Presbytery meeting. Donations of food and drink are needed, as well as volunteers to help serve food between 6:45-9:45am on July 28 at Covenant Presbyterian Church. Food donations should be delivered to the WPC Fellowship Hall kitchen by 6pm on Monday, July 27. Sign up and see what kind/how much food is needed at www.bit.ly/1J5jUs.

Contact: Barbara Rynerson (brynerson@nc.rr.com)

Ushers

WPC has pledged to fill four ushering spots for the morning worship service of the Presbytery meeting. Ushers will be needed from 8:45-10:30am on Tuesday, July 28, at Covenant Presbyterian Church. Sign up at www.bit.ly/myWPCserve.

Contact: Amy Hill (markandamyhill@gmail.com)

Photo Session Hosts Needed

Photo sessions for Westminster’s new church photo directory will take place in August and September. Photo Session Hosts are needed to guide people to their photography appointments.

Host responsibilities include:

- Welcome families and answer questions
- Complete check-in paperwork
- Verify family contact information and update as needed

Shifts last 2 or 3 hours and hosts are asked to arrive 10 minutes early for training from the Lifetouch photography team.

Visit www.bit.ly/myWPCserve to sign up or email Kim Garcia (kim.garcia@duke.edu). Please wait for a confirmation email from Kim Garcia before you add the date to your calendar.

See page 3 for more on Westminster’s new church photo directory.

Volunteer with Our Children & Youth!

The new Child and Youth Protection Policy requires all who volunteer with children/youth to take a training on keeping our children safe while offering warmth and hospitality to our guests. Whether you’re volunteering in the nursery on Sunday morning or chaperoning a youth trip, you’ll need this training.

Please RSVP if you plan to attend; childcare will be provided by RSVP only.

1. **Sunday, July 12** 11am, Room 207. RSVP at www.bit.ly/wpc7-12CYPPT by July 10.
**Have You Scheduled Your Appointment Yet?**

The Westminster congregation is making steady progress to meet the Assimilation Committee’s goal of having every member and regularly attending guest included in the 2015 church photo directory.

As of today, 141 photo appointments have been scheduled, and there's still more than a month to go before the photography begins – that's incredible! Thank you to every family, individual, and couple that has signed up so far.

If you haven’t made your appointment yet, please visit [www.bit.ly/wpcPhotoSignUp](http://www.bit.ly/wpcPhotoSignUp). These days still have the following number of appointments open:

- **August 10 & 11**: FULL
- **Wednesday, September 16**: 10 appointments
- **Thursday, September 17**: 13 appointments
- **Friday, September 18**: 13 appointments
- **Saturday, September 19**: 8 appointments

When we get 90% of our appointment spots filled, we'll open another day for photography, so no one will be turned away.

Contact the church office at 919-489-4974 with questions about signing up or rescheduling your appointment.

*Don’t Forget! Everyone who has their photo taken for the directory will receive a free 8x10 portrait along with their directory.*
Vacation Church School

A tremendous
THANK YOU!
to all the youth and adults who helped make Vacation Church School happen this year.

Your positive presence brought smiles to kids’ faces. They have great memories of that week in June out at New Hope Camp, thanks to all your hard work!
Tell Us What You Like in a Logo

The Logo Committee would like to thank the 70+ people who submitted words and phrases about Westminster to help in the first phase of developing a new logo for the church.

As we continue gathering input from the congregation, we want to know what styles, designs, and colors you like.

Below are some different types of logos from other churches. Please visit www.bit.ly/wpcLogo10 to tell us if you like or dislike each one, and to share any extra thoughts about what you like or don't like about them.

If you have questions, please email logo@wpcedurham.org or contact any member of the Logo Committee (Sam Bryan, Holly Cullen, Dave Mountain, Karen Stallings, Kara Pearce).
youth ministry

news

The junior and senior high youth were hard at work last week in Asheville and Rutherford County. Enjoy these photos and reflections from their time serving others.

Asheville Youth Mission

Today, we woke up and drove to the Black Mountain Children's Home. Our activities there included weeding, planting, and mulching their garden. After our hard work, we got to play with the animals such as goats, sheep, alpacas, etc. We then ate lunch and drove to Pritchard Park. When we arrived, we handed out Popsicles and played games with the people around the park. There were lots of different people there, some who did not have homes, and had nothing to do during the day. We then came home, ate dinner, and played games. After the games we drove to the Asheville Labyrinth. After a long, silent, spiritual walk through the labyrinth, we found that the silence gave us time to think about our relationship with God and the people around us.

- Melissa and Alex, June 30

Appalachia Service Project

My experiences on the 30th of June were great. Our family, whose house we are working on, are some of the kindest people I have met. Mrs. Rita’s granddaughter took her senior pictures. Rita worked with the granddaughter for 2 hours curling hair and doing makeup and other things to get ready. When finished she looked fantastic. We put up siding, insulation, t-channels, 1x2’s and 1x4’s. With the siding and other things you really get to see the progress you make that day and week. I feel that through seeing my progress and the kindness of the family I am seeing Christ more as a whole instead of as in just separate things. I saw God as a whole instead that night as some of the people sang with some people from a Methodist church for an hour, not discussing anything but the next song we were going to sing.

- Connor, June 30

YOUTH MINISTRY CALENDAR

7/9-12 Massanetta Middle School Conference
7/15Montreat Preparation Meeting, 6pm, Fellowship Hall
7/19-25Montreat Youth Conference
Community Opportunities

Looking for Help With Your Grief?

Sometimes those who are grieving for a loved one become upset and discouraged as well as sad. It seems like no one understands. At Growing thru Grief, we appreciate how grief feels. We offer ongoing help and support so no one has to make the journey alone.

Growing Thru Grief is a coalition of churches and organizations that offers support and education to those who are mourning the death of loved ones. We meet every Tuesday except holidays at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church (1200 West Cornwallis Rd). Join us for coffee and cookies at 4 pm and the meeting from 4:30-6pm. All are welcome! (Contact: Betty Berghaus, 919-489-4974)
The next WPC newsletter will be published on July 29. The deadline to submit material is July 22.

To submit material for publication, contact Communication Coordinator Kara Pearce (kara@wpcdurham.org; 919-489-4974, ext. 101).

The newsletter is emailed. If you prefer to receive a paper copy by mail, please contact Kara Pearce.

**Preaching Schedule**

**July 12**
Preaching: Chris Tuttle

**July 19**
Preaching: Taylor Lewis Guthrie Hartman

**July 26 - Birthday Sunday**
Preaching: Betty Berghaus

**August 2 - Communion Sunday**
Preaching: Chris Tuttle

**Worship Volunteers for July 12, 19, 26, and August 2**

There are many openings available to usher and serve in the nursery.
Please consider volunteering. Visit www.bit.ly/myWPCserve to see which dates need you and to sign up.

**ACOLYTES**
- 7/12 Lyndsay & Abbie Mangum
- 7/19 Ella Brooks Tuttle, Georgia Vaughn
- 7/26 Molly & Henry McLaughlin
- 8/2 Brennan Higgins

**LECTORS**
- 7/12 Gene Brannon
- 7/19 Rachel Meyen
- 7/26 Judy Lamon
- 8/2 Barbara Rynerson

**OFFERING COUNTERS**
- 7/12 Bill & Mary Anne Pogue
- 7/19 Beth Eagen, Gloria Kanoy
- 7/26 Mike & Kay Rosenmarkle
- 8/2 Alex & Mary Denson

**USHERS**
- 7/12 Jeremy & Laurel Trantham, Volunteers Needed
- 7/19 Robert & Jennie Brame, Cathy Snider, Volunteers Needed
- 7/26 Barb & Bill Burig, Margaret & Frank Falkovic
- 8/2 Mary Beck Sutton, Volunteers Needed

**NURSERY**
Monthly Coordinator: July - Melissa Katrincic, August - OPEN

Every Sunday: Infant - WPC Nursery Staff

- 7/12 Toddler: Monica, Lauren & Ella Nichols, 2-3: OPEN, 4-5: Jan & Holland Hale
- 7/19 Toddler: OPEN, 2-3: Katie Walker, OPEN, 4-5: OPEN
- 7/26 Toddler: Katie Donoway, Rayner England Jr., 2-3: OPEN, 4-5: Melissa & Lee Katrincic
- 8/2 Toddler: OPEN, 2-3: Dexter Meath, Margaret Williams, 4-5: OPEN

**SOUND TECHNICIANS**
- July Gene Zielinski
- August Mark Hill