



## NESHAMINY-WARWICK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

First Sunday of Advent

December 3, 2023

### WELCOME

### HYMN NO. 8

*"Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates"*

### ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

Debbie, Emily, & Aubrey Smith

**Reader:** In the days of exile and uncertainty, the prophet Isaiah cried out: O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence. As when fire sets twigs ablaze and causes water to boil, come down to make your name known to your enemies and cause the nations to quake before you! For when you did awesome things that we did not expect, you came down, and the mountains trembled before you.

**Reader:** In the midst of our own encounters with uncertainty and upheaval and our longing for deliverance, Jesus calls to us, "Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come" (Mark 13:35).

**Reader:** We wait as people surprised again and again by God who shakes us out of our complacency and wakes us up to the work of the kingdom all around us.

**Reader:** We light this candle as a sign of our shocking hope. May we stay awake to God's activity in the world as we wait in expectation that even now God is with us, working to restore us to the fullness of life with God and one another. **Amen.**

*Light the first candle of the Advent wreath.*

### CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Christ is coming!

**People: We will keep awake!**

Leader: Christ is coming!

**People: We will be ready!**

Leader: Christ is coming!

**People: Praise be to God! We will worship and prepare.**

## WORSHIP SONG

“He Shall Reign Forevermore”

In the bleak mid-winter, all creation groans  
For a world in darkness, frozen like a stone  
Light is breaking, in a stable  
For a throne

*And He shall reign forevermore, forevermore  
And He shall reign forevermore, forevermore  
Unto us a child is born  
The King of kings and Lord of lords  
And He shall reign forevermore, forevermore*

If I were a wise man, I would travel far  
And if I were a shepherd, I would do my part  
But poor as I am  
I will give to Him my heart

Bridge: Contemporary Worship Team

*(You may be seated)*

## SCRIPTURE READING

Daniel 7:9-14

<sup>9</sup>As I watched, thrones were set in place, and an Ancient One took his throne; his clothing was white as snow and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames, and its wheels were burning fire. <sup>10</sup>A stream of fire issued and flowed out from his presence. A thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood attending him. The court sat in judgment, and the books were opened. <sup>11</sup>I watched then because of the noise of the arrogant words that the horn was speaking. And as I watched, the beast was put to death and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire. <sup>12</sup>As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time. <sup>13</sup>As I watched in the night visions, I saw one like a human being coming with the clouds of heaven. And he came to the Ancient One and was presented before him. <sup>14</sup>To him was given dominion and glory and kingship, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away, and his kingship is one that shall never be destroyed.

Leader: The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God**

## WORSHIP SONG

“God with Us”

Oh You've come To bring peace  
To be love To be nearer to us  
You've come To bring life  
To be light To shine brighter in us  
Oh Emmanuel God with us

*Our Deliverer You are Savior  
In Your presence we find our strength  
Over everything Our redemption  
God with us You are God with us*

You've come To be hope  
To this world For Your honor and name  
You've come To take sin  
To bear shame And to conquer the grave  
Oh Emmanuel God with us (Chorus)

*Bridge*  
You are here You are holy  
We are standing In Your glory 4x (Chorus)

## BAPTISM

Lucas Harold Ferguson

*(After the baptism, children will be dismissed to their Sunday School teacher,  
or if you prefer they may return to their seats with you.)*

## CHOIR ANTHEM

“Prepare for the Coming of the Lord”

## CALL TO CONFESSION

Preparing for Christ's coming requires honest examination of our lives and our hearts. Let us turn to God in prayer to confess our sins.

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Prince of Peace, the wars and rumors of wars betray our addiction to violence, our destructive and dehumanizing ways. We deserve your judgement and condemnation. Yet, you remain faithful, a steadfast source of peace during our warring madness. Holy God, turn us from evil. Return us to Christ and his path of peace. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Amen.

*(Please take a moment of silent confession)*

## DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation. The old life has gone; a new life has begun. Know that you are forgiven and be at peace. **Amen.**

*(Please stand if you are able)*

## RESPONSE TO ASSURANCE

“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.**

*(You may be seated)*

## INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

“All things in heaven and earth belong to God, who is coming in glory to reveal a new creation.” Let us present our tithes and offerings to the Lord.

## OFFERTORY

Suzanne Zak Carver

*(If you are our guest, please don't feel obligated to participate.  
We would be honored if today's service could be our gift to you.)*

*(Please stand if you are able)*

## DOXOLOGY “Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”

**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 DEDICATION

Christ calls us to live generous and grateful lives. Take these gifts we offer today, O God, and use them to the fulfillment of Christ's ministry. May these gifts help to free the captives, heal the sick, comfort the lonely, feed the hungry, heal the wounded. As Christ's hands and feet, use us too, in service to building your beloved community. **Amen.**

*(You may be seated)*

## SCRIPTURE READING

Mark 13:24-27

<sup>24</sup>“But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, <sup>25</sup>and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. <sup>26</sup>“Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. <sup>27</sup>Then he will send out the angels and gather the elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

Leader: The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God**

## SERMON

“The Empty Throne”

Pastor Mark Lyndaker-Studer

*(Please stand if you are able)*

## AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Apostles Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## **GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING** (Page 12 Blue Hymnal)

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord Our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

...Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with choirs of angels, with prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and with all the faithful of every time and place, who forever sing to the glory of your name:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and God might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna In the highest**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest**

...With thanksgiving, we offer our very selves to you to be a living and holy sacrifice, dedicated to your service.

Great is the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died,**

**Christ is risen,**

**Christ will come again.**

## **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.**

*(Everyone is welcome to partake of the elements. We will be using prepackaged wafers and juice.*

*Please come forward by the center aisle, take the elements from one of the baskets, and return to your seat by the side aisle. Please hold your elements until all are served so we can partake together.*

*There are also gluten-free elements on the side tables.)*

**COMMUNION SONG**            “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”            Contemporary Team

O come, O come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appear.

**Chorus: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!**

O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer Our spirits by Thine advent here;  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, And death’s dark shadows put to flight. (*Chorus*)

O come, Desire of nations, bind All peoples in one heart and mind;  
Bid envy, strife, and discord cease; Fill the whole world with heaven’s peace. (*Chorus*)

## **PARTAKING OF THE SACRAMENT**

### **COMMUNION PRAYER**

**HYMN NO. 2**                            “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

### **CHARGE**

Go out into the world in peace. Be of good courage. Hold onto what is good. Render no one evil for evil. Uplift the fainthearted. Support the weak. Laugh with those who laugh and mourn with those who mourn. Do this in a spirit of joy and appreciation for you are God's child. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

### **BLESSING**

May God strengthen us to the end; Christ draw near to our very gates; and the Holy Spirit awaken our spirits; until, with eager longing, we greet the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.



**Prayer Concerns:** Monty Anderson

Vincent Evans (brother of Sue McOwen)  
Liz & Larry Arnold (friends of Sandee Wilson)  
Julia Bernanke (friend of Erin Watson)  
Family of Maria Escardille (friend of Bill Watson)  
Libby Moore  
Family of John Roushey  
Luca (friend of Jan Millin)  
Amy Dietz & family (friend of Sandee Wilson)  
Melissa Stokes (cousin of Sandee Wilson)  
Jonie Garcia (mother of Dave Garcia)  
Malory Mee (friend of Garcia family)  
Allan Schrage (friend of Sue Rems)  
Sue Ellen Nolan-Greeby (sister of Bill Watson)  
Ed Sochanski (friend of Bill Watson)  
Terry Blue (friend of Dave & Joanne Cochran)  
Lois Williams (friend of Nina Resavage)  
Connie Reisinger (friend of Wendy Wirsch)  
Sharon Burrink (friend of Wendy Wirsch)  
Rima Mironas (mother of Dalia Lucas)  
David Rankin (nephew of Deborah Kapinos & Paul Rankin)

**Ongoing Concerns:** Charles Sutton  
Dorothy Moritz  
Karen Meade  
Debbie Edwards  
Kerry Zimmerman  
Debbie Watson  
Robin Haug  
Rob Salvia



### **PULPIT FLOWERS**

The pulpit flowers are given in loving memory of Florene Heller from the Hellers; and given in loving memory of Joseph V. Marabito from the Zebley family. The third arrangement is given in loving memory of his wife Joan and granddaughter Shaelee from Werner Thiessen. Deacons Leslie Bonner & Dottie Kieffer will deliver the flowers. Each week the flowers can be a bright moment for someone needing prayers or praise. If anyone in the congregation has a person in mind to give the pulpit flowers to, please contact Cindy Anderson at 215-672-3219.

Pulpit flowers are needed for December 31st. If you are interested in donating pulpit flowers, please contact Dorothy Smith at 215-343-1142.



### **ADVENT DINNER & NATIVITY NIGHT**

On Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup>, at 4:00pm we will hold a catered dinner, decorate the Christmas tree, make some crafts and enjoy a visit from Santa. Following the dinner, at 6pm, the Sunday school kids will perform in a LIVE Nativity complete with LIVE sheep, goats, and a donkey. It is a night full of fellowship as well as a great opportunity to reach out and share the gift of Christmas with the community around us. Please sign up on one of the sheets in the Narthex or Auditorium if you will be having dinner with us.

## MISSION CORNER

It's That Time Again!!

\$25 Gift Cards from Target & Walmart for

West Kensington Ministries, Crossroads in Hunting Park, Oxford Circle in Frankford

We can bring a little sunshine into their Christmas. The deadline is December 10th.

Inspired by the teachings of Jesus and the generosity of our congregation.

The basket for the gift cards is in the Auditorium.

As always, THANK YOU for your generosity!

## ITEMS STILL NEEDED FOR CODE BLUE PANTRY

We are still looking for volunteers to help provide items needed to feed our Code Blue guests in December:

- Individual bottles of water
- box of assorted individual bags of chips
- soft granola bars
- individually wrapped cookies
- individually wrapped Tastykakes
- individually wrapped string cheese
- individual cups of yogurt; canned vegetables - corn, green beans, peas, carrots
- individual pudding snack cups
- individual fruit snack cups

Please text/call Jan Helsel (215-715-5146) or email (jjhelsel@yahoo.com) if you can help as I'm keeping a list so we don't have too much of one item and not enough of another.

By the way, thanks to your generosity, we should not need any more casseroles! You're the best!

## CHRISTMAS SHOEBOXES

Christmas is coming! This year we will be packing shoeboxes for the children at Crossroads Community Center in North Philadelphia. Crossroads is in one of the poorest areas of Philadelphia. Many of the children in the neighborhood depend on Crossroads for one or two meals a day. For some, the shoeboxes we put together will be the only Christmas gift they receive.

If you would like to help us with this ministry, please sign up for the age and gender you would like to fill a box for on the sign-up sheet in the outer narthex. Be sure to take a slip of paper with the appropriate gift suggestions for the age you selected.

**Please return shoeboxes filled, wrapped and labeled clearly with age and gender by**

**Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>! Thank you!**

If you have any questions contact Donna Mazeika: donna.mazeika@nwpc.net

## POINSETTIAS

All those interested in making donations for poinsettias to decorate the sanctuary at Christmas time please notify Dorothy Smith (215-343-1142) by Sunday, December 3. Please fill out the form below indicating which option you prefer.

- I am interested in making a donation (any dollar amount). I understand the poinsettias will be delivered to shut-ins.
- I prefer to make a donation for a poinsettia (\$10). I understand I can pick up this poinsettia after the 7:00 service on December 24.

As all donations will be noted in the Sunday, December 10 bulletin, please designate what the wording should be for you.

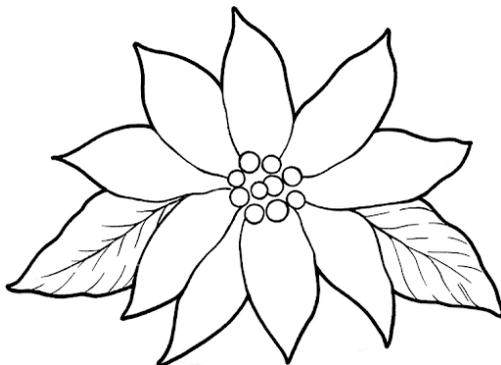
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In memory of from Mr. & Mrs. Smith, etc.

All checks should be made payable to: Neshaminy-Warwick Presbyterian Church, Attn: Poinsettias and forwarded to the church at 1401 Meetinghouse Road, Hartsville, Warminster, PA 18974.

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(Signature)



## THIS WEEK AT NESHAMINY

SUNDAY—Prayer Group 8:30 am Lounge

—Worship Service 9 am Sanctuary

—Food & Fellowship 10 am Auditorium

—Mary-Martha Circle 10:30 am Lounge

—Cantata Rehearsal 10:30 am Choir Room

—Youth Group 6 pm Youth Room

WEDNESDAY—Bible Study 10 am Auditorium

THURSDAY—William Tennent House Assoc. Board Meeting 2 pm Lounge

—Choir Rehearsal 7 pm Choir Room

SATURDAY—Advent Dinner & Nativity Night 4 pm Auditorium/Outside

SUNDAY—Prayer Group 8:30 am Lounge

—Worship Service 9 am Sanctuary

—Food & Fellowship 10 am Auditorium

—Mission Team Meeting 10 am Lounge

—Cantata Rehearsal 10:30 am Choir Room

### WAYS TO GIVE



**ONLINE:**

[www.nwpc.net](http://www.nwpc.net)



**ON YOUR PHONE:**

- Open the camera on your phone
- Point the camera at the QR code
- Follow phone prompts to give via credit card



**ENVELOPE:**

1401 Meetinghouse Road,  
Warminster PA 18974

### Church Staff

Rev. Mark Lyndaker-Studer, Pastor

Donna Mazeika, Director of Children & Youth

Rev. Sameh Shaker, Pastor of Visitation

Dr. Suzanne Zak Carver, Director of Music

Keith Rounds, Contemporary Music

Marianne Tierney, Business Manager

Cheryl Overton, Church Administrator

Remembering that the members of Neshaminy-Warwick Presbyterian Church are the ministers and missionaries of our faith community, our Pastoral Staff and Support Team provide leadership and specialized ministries.