



NESHAMINY-WARWICK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 24, 2024

WELCOME

HYMN NO. 41

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING Melissa, John, Jack, Benjamin, and Amanda Keyburn
Reader: When the angel Gabriel visited Mary, announcing God's plan for her to conceive and give birth to the Messiah, "Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?'" (Luke 1:34) And yet, only a few months later, Mary sings to Elizabeth, My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is his name (Luke 1:46-49).

Reader: We, like Mary, hear God's call to be part of making God's dream for our salvation and flourishing a reality, and we question, "How can this be? I am only..." Yet, like Mary, the "onlys" that make us hesitate are gifts God can and will use as God's love transforms us into bearers of good news.

Reader: We wait as people who have encountered divine Love that disrupts the status quo and ushers us into abundant life marked by mutual love and peace that flows from the flourishing of all people.

Reader: We light these candles as signs of our shocking hope, our just peace, our fierce joy, and the love that transforms us. May Love grow within us, transforming us into bold witnesses of God's salvation with our voices and our lives. Amen.

Light the four outer candles of the Advent wreath.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Do not be afraid. God is with us.

People: *Savior of the nations, come.*

WORSHIP SONG

“Go Tell it on the Mountain”

Chorus:

Go, tell it on the mountain over the hills and everywhere;
Go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching o’er silent floods by night,
Behold throughout the heavens there shone a holy light. (Chorus)

The shepherds feared and trembled when lo! above the earth,
Rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior’s birth. (Chorus)

Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born,
And God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. (Chorus)

(You may be seated)

SCRIPTURE READING

Ruth 1:15-19

¹⁵So she said, “Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law.” ¹⁶But Ruth said, “Do not press me to leave you, to turn back from following you! Where you go, I will go; where you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people and your God my God. ¹⁷Where you die, I will die, and there will I be buried. May the LORD do thus to me, and more as well, if even death parts me from you!” ¹⁸When Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more to her. ¹⁹So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem.

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)

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Donna Mazeika

(We invite all children through 5th grade to come up to the front of the Sanctuary for a special message for them. They will then be dismissed to their Sunday School teacher, or if you prefer they may return to their seats with you.)

CHOIR ANTHEM

"All Glory be to God on High"

While shepherds watched their flocks by night, all seated on the ground,
the angel of the Lord came down, and glory shone around.

"Fear not," said he, for mighty dread had seized their troubled mind.
Glad tidings of great joy I bring to you and humankind, to you and humankind."

"To you, in David's town this day is born of David's line
a Savior who is Christ the Lord, and this shall be a sign:
The holy Child you there shall find," the angel said to them;
"in a manger bed, in swaddling clothes, in tiny Bethlehem. Go now to Bethlehem!"

"All glory be to God on high, and to the earth be peace;
good will henceforth from heav'n to earth begin and never cease."

"All glory be to God on high, and to the earth be peace;
good will henceforth from heav'n to earth begin and never cease, never cease."

All glory be to God on high!

CALL TO CONFESSION

On this Fourth Sunday of Advent, let us confess the sins that have kept us from glorifying and enjoying our God.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious God, we anticipate the birth of our newborn savior. Yet we are depressed by the suffering and despair of our world. Our hearts grow hard with hopelessness. What reason is there to rejoice? We question your power and doubt our faith. Emmanuel, help us resist the overwhelming forces that drag us down. Lift our spirits so we can experience your transcendent presence and incarnate grace. Amen.

(Please take a moment of silent confession)

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

"The steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting." 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)

PASTORAL PRAYER

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.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

With joy and gratitude for all we have been given, let us offer our tithes and gifts to God.

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

Gracious God, accept these gifts in grateful response for your generosity. May these gifts bring joy to those most in need of Christ’s mission and ministry. **Amen.**

(You may be seated)

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 2:1-4

2 In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David.

Leader: The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God**

SERMON

“God Cares About it All”

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.

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

Magnify the Lord and rejoice, for nothing is impossible with God. And the blessing of God, who creates, redeems, and restores, be with you now and always.

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Due to the Christmas Eve holiday, there will not be Food & Fellowship today.

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Prayer Concerns: Family of Carol Moyer (sister in law of Debbie Watson)
Family of Bob Maull
Donna Palzer (friend of Debbie Watson)
Soukchay Khounxay (friend of Debbie Watson)
Cathy Shaheen
Monty Anderson
Vincent Evans (brother of Sue McOwen)
Liz & Larry Arnold (friends of Sandee Wilson)
Julia Bernanke (friend of Erin Watson)
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)
Lois Williams (friend of Nina Resavage)
Connie Reisinger (friend of Wendy Wirsch)
Sharon Burrink (friend of Wendy Wirsch)
Rima Mironas (mother of Dalia Lucas)

Ongoing Concerns: David Rankin
Charles Sutton
Dorothy Moritz
Karen Meade
Debbie Edwards
Kerry Zimmerman
Debbie Watson
Robin Haug



PULPIT FLOWERS

The pulpit flowers are given to wish a merry Christmas to everyone; and given to wish their “Neshaminy family” a blessed Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year from Jill and Peter Clayton. Deacons Beth Haller & Peg Kaelin 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 January 7th, January 14th, February 11th and February 25th. If you are interested in donating pulpit flowers, please contact Dorothy Smith at 215-343-1142.

MISSION CORNER

\$25 Gift Cards from Target & Walmart for
West Kensington Ministries, Crossroads in Hunting Park, Oxford Circle in Frankford
YOU DID IT!!!

The total for gift cards is \$4,825 YOU have helped 181 families have a better Christmas. YOU get the reason for the season. Jesus said that whatever you do to the least of my brethren that you do unto me. Your generosity is humbling and much appreciated.

FOOD COLLECTION

The need for assistance is great and you can help! We still collect non-perishable food items for the Coordinating Council of Health and Welfare's Warminster Food Bank. Non-perishable food items can be dropped off in the bin right inside the double-glass doors by the Sanctuary any time. This ongoing mission is coordinated by the Deacons.

OFFICE SCHEDULE

We hope you won't be inconvenienced but due to staff vacations and schedules, the office will not be open during our normal business hours during the week of December 24th. Please call ahead to check on availability if you need assistance from the office.

For unto
us a
Child
is born



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

5 pm Children/Family Worship

7 pm Candlelight Worship



WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Themes of the Bible

Bible Study will resume on January 10th

Join us for bible study at 10:00 A.M. Whether you have spent years studying the Bible or the Bible is new to you, this class is for you. Beginning this fall we will be looking at big ideas that are core to the Biblical story. We will look at them from their first appearance through the entire narrative (*Image of God, Justice, Exile, Holiness, Covenants, Sacrifice, Temple, Son of Man, Eternal life, Sabbath, Water of life, Tree of life, Blessing and Curse, Kingdom of God, Anointing, Heaven and Earth*). This will help you to be able to see patterns throughout the Bible and come to understand the entire story of the Bible in a much deeper and greater way.

Newcomers are always welcome!



Dear Friends,

As another year draws to a close, we wanted to take this opportunity to acknowledge how blessed we feel to be part of this family of faith known as Neshaminy-Warwick. Our thanks to all of you who have contributed so generously of your time, talent, and treasure during the past twelve months.

Special thanks for your kind expressions of love and friendship to staff members by way of cards, notes, and gifts during this holiday season.

May God bless you and your loved ones with comfort, joy, and peace this Christmas and throughout the coming year.

Peace in Christ,

Mark Lyndaker-Studer, Donna Mazeika, Cheryl Overton,
Keith Rounds, Sameh Shaker, Marianne Tierney and Suzanne Zak Carver

THIS WEEK AT NESHAMINY

SUNDAY—Prayer Group 8:30 am Lounge
—Worship Service 9 am Sanctuary
—Christmas Eve Children/Family Service 5 pm Sanctuary
—Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 7 pm Sanctuary

SUNDAY—Prayer Group 8:30 am Lounge
—Worship Service 9 am Sanctuary

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.