



NESHAMINY-WARWICK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

First Sunday of Christmas

December 31, 2023

PRELUDE

"Pastoral Symphony" by Hsandel

WELCOME

Elder Jim Flick

HYMN NO. 38

"It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"

CALL TO WORSHIP

Elder Jim Flick

Leader: Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations.

People: Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

Leader: Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love,

People: so that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

Leader: Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us and prosper for us the work of our hands—

People: O prosper the work of our hands!

Leader: Let us worship God!

WORSHIP SONG

“The First Noel”

The first noel the angels did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep
On a cold winter's night that was so deep

*Noel, noel, noel, noel,
Born is the king of Israel*

They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the east beyond them far
And to the earth it gave great light
And so it continued both day and night

Then let us all with one accord
Sing praises to thy heavenly lord
That hath made heaven and earth of nought
And with his blood mankind has bought

Bridge: Contemporary Worship Team

(You may be seated)

SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 61:10-62:3

Elder Erin Nelmes

¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my whole being shall exult in my God, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. ¹¹For as the earth brings forth its shoots and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations. **62** For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication shines out like the dawn and her salvation like a burning torch. ²The nations shall see your vindication and all the kings your glory, and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will give. ³You shall be a beautiful crown in the hand of the LORD and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

Leader: The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God**

WORSHIP SONG

“Hymn of Joy”

Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee
God of glory, Lord of love
Hearts unfold like flowers before Thee
Opening to the sun above
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness
Drive the dark of doubt away
Giver of immortal gladness
Fill us with the light of day

Rejoice, rejoice!
Emmanuel
Your love has come
Here to dwell

All Thy works with joy surround Thee
Earth and heaven reflect thy rays
Stars and angels sing around Thee
Center of unbroken praise
Field and forest, vale and mountain
Flow'ry meadow, flashing sea
Singing bird and flowing fountain
Call us to rejoice in Thee

Mortals join the happy chorus
Which the morning stars began
Father love is reigning o'er us
Brother love binds man to man
Ever singing march we onward
Victors in the midst of strife
Joyful music leads us sunward
In the triumph song of life

(There is no children's message today; Sunday school for Kindergarten and under only.)

CALL TO CONFESSION

Elder Erin Nelmes

Scripture tells us that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Scripture also promises us that we are now made right with God by God's grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Acknowledging this truth about ourselves and with gratitude for the truth about God, let us confess our sins in God's presence and before one another.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Elder Erin Nelmes

Gracious and loving God, as we stand on the threshold of a new year, we look back and recognize the many ways we have fallen short of your glory: missed opportunities to share your love; times when we were silent when we could have spoken up for what was right; indifference to your claim on our whole lives through Jesus Christ; and a lack of gratitude for your amazing grace by which you save us and call us to be your people. Lord, forgive us. As we look ahead to a new year, free us from thinking we can save ourselves. Help us to follow where you lead. Show us how to be your children and your heirs, forgiven and freed to live for our God and for one another in love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Please take a moment of silent confession)

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Elder Erin Nelmes

The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance: that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Believe the good news: In Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven.

(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

Elder Jim Flick

LORD'S PRAYER

Elder Jim Flick

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

Elder Jim Flick

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. Let us give thanks to the Lord as we continue our worship and bring our tithes and offerings.

OFFERTORY

Keith Rounds

*(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

Elder Jim Flick

Gracious and giving God, we give thanks to you for you are good. Your steadfast love endures forever. We thank you for the blessings of the past year and for how you have stood with us and guided us in difficult times. We give thanks that you will stand with us and guide us in the year to come. Bless these offerings that they may be used to your glory and in service to others in the name of your Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ. Help us to have grateful hearts and to live as the joyful people of God; through Jesus Christ, the greatest gift of all. **Amen.**

(You may be seated)

SCRIPTURE READING

Galatians 4:4-7

Elder Jim Flick

⁴But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. ⁶And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir through God.

Leader: The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God**

SERMON

"Clothed in an Identity of Hope"

Elder Jim Flick

(Please stand if you are able)

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (from A Declaration of Faith)

Elder Jim Flick

Jesus, the long-expected Savior, came into the world as a child, descended from David, conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of Mary, a virgin. He lived as a Jew among Jews. He announced to his people the coming of God's kingdom of justice and peace on earth. We affirm that Jesus was born of woman as is every child, yet born of God's power as was no other child. In the person and work of Jesus, God himself and a human life are united but not confused, distinguished but not separated. The coming of Jesus was itself the coming of God's promised rule. Through his birth, life, death, and resurrection, he brings about the relationship between God and humanity that God always intended. Jesus is Lord! He has been Lord from the beginning. He will be Lord at the end. Even now he is Lord. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

HYMN NO. 44

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

CHARGE

Elder Jim Flick

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

Elder Jim Flick

May God, redeemer of Israel, dismiss us in peace; may Jesus Christ, Son of God, Son of Mary, uphold us in love; may the Holy Spirit, the power of God, guide us in truth.

POSTLUDE

"Glory to God" by Handel



Prayer Concerns: Family of Carol Moyer (sister in law of Debbie Watson)
Family of Charles Wanthouse
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 in memory of loved ones from Charlotte Rugel; and given to the glory of God. Deacons Cindy Anderson & Don Millin 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

THIS WEEK AT NESHAMINY

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

MONDAY—New Year's Day (Office closed)

THURSDAY—Choir Rehearsal 7 pm Choir Room

SUNDAY—Prayer Group 8:30 am Lounge
—Worship Service 9 am Sanctuary
—Food & Fellowship 10 am Auditorium
—Youth Group 6 pm Youth Room

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.