



NESHAMINY-WARWICK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Second Sunday of Advent

December 8, 2024

WELCOME

HYMN NO. 8

"Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates"

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

Jim, Debbie, and Naomi Flick

Reader: In days when God's people longed for peace, Isaiah declared, "Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins" (Isaiah 40:1).

Reader: We who gather today also seek comfort and peace, yet we are unsatisfied with ideas of peace that tell us to keep quiet and go with the flow. We long for real peace, true peace, just peace.

Reader: We wait as people who yearn for peace that bears the fruit of community, equity, and flourishing for all.

Reader: We light these candles as signs of God's shocking hope and just peace. May they be beacons calling us to repent and to live the good news of Jesus Christ as we wait and watch and labor for the day when all people can gather together to worship and glorify God. **Amen.**

Light two candles of the Advent wreath.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Zechariah sang to his newborn son:

People: "You, child, will be called a prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way."

Leader: You will tell his people how to be saved through the forgiveness of their sins.

People: Because of our God's deep compassion, the dawn from heaven will break upon us,

Leader: to give light to those who are sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death,

People: to guide us on the path of peace."

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

Here within a manger lies
The One who made the starry skies
This baby born for sacrifice
Christ, the Messiah
Into our hopes, into our fears
The Savior of the world appears
The promise of eternal years
Christ, the Messiah

(You may be seated)

SCRIPTURE READING

Malachi 3:1-7

3 See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. **2** But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner’s fire and like washers’ soap; **3** he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. **4** Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD, as in the days of old and as in former years. **5** Then I will draw near to you for judgment; I will be swift to bear witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear

falsely, against those who oppress the hired workers in their wages, the widow, and the orphan, against those who thrust aside the alien and do not fear me, says the LORD of hosts. ⁶For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, have not perished. ⁷Ever since the days of your ancestors you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts. But you say, "How shall we return?"

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.)

SPECIAL MUSIC

“Jesus, What a Wonderful Child”

Christine Van Tassel, Soloist

Jesus, Jesus, oh, what a wonderful Child! Oh Jesus, my Jesus, so lowly, meek and mild.

New life, new hope, new joy He brings. Won't you listen to the angels sing?

Glory, glory, glory to the newborn King! *(Repeat)*

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," "Fear not!" for mighty dread had seized their troubled mind.

"Glad tidings of great joy I bring to you and all mankind."

His name is Jesus, Jesus, oh, what a wonderful Child!

Oh Jesus, my Jesus, so lowly, meek and mild.

New life, new hope, new joy He brings. Won't you listen to the angels sing?

Glory, glory, glory to the newborn King!

His name is Jesus, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God!

Oh! Jesus, King of kings! Lord of lords! Prince of peace!

Oh! Jesus, Jesus, oh, what a wonderful Child!

His name is Jesus, Jesus, so lowly, meek and mild.

New life, new hope, new joy He brings Won't you listen to the angels sing?

Glory, glory, glory to the newborn King!

Jesus, Jesus, oh what a wonderful Child! Jesus, Jesus so lowly, meek and mild.

New life, new hope, new joy He brings. Won't you listen to the angels sing?

Glory, glory, glory to the newborn King!

Jesus, Jesus, oh, what a wonderful Child! Jesus, Jesus, so lowly, meek and mild.

New life, new hope, new joy He brings. Won't you listen to the angels sing?

Glory, glory, glory, Singin' glory, glory, glory,

Singin' glory, glory, glory to the newborn King, newborn King!

CALL TO CONFESSION

Scripture reminds us that repentance is part of our preparation to meet Christ. Let us therefore confess our sins together, trusting in his mercy and love.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy God, we confess we prefer the crooked paths where we think we can hide from you. We'd rather you didn't examine us too closely, all we do and fail to do. Yet you are coming not to judge, but to save us from our sins and our love of sinning. So come, Lord, by crooked path or straight, to enter our aching hearts. In the certainty of your grace we make our prayer. Amen.

(Please take a moment of silent confession)

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Leader: Hear the good news! Christ is our peace. Through him we have forgiveness and new hope.

People: He comes to break the power of sin and set us free again. Alleluia! 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

Leader: Holy, beloved God, we come before you seeking strength and comfort, someone to help us bear the load or to give us a load worth bearing. In our praying, give us open ears to hear your assurances and open hearts to feel your peace, even as we say together: God of peace,

People: hear our prayers.

Leader: We pray for the church, this family of hopeful people, persistent in faithfulness and graciousness, marked by a willingness to work in kindness and not count the hours or the cost. As the world darkens and the days grow short, may Christ’s light in us shine with a steady flame, bringing light, bringing healing, bringing reconciliation, and bringing peace. We pray for common sense, and the touch of faithful humility that marked the life of your son, our Savior. that we may determine to live lives of kindness and grace. God of peace,

People: hear our prayers.

Leader: God of faithfulness and truth, we pray for the world around us, for peoples whose names we do not know yet whose hurts fill the news, and whose afflictions touch us not nearly long enough. We can change a channel, or turn a page, but they endure the long days and months of famine and thirst, of war and feud, of corruption and despair. Solutions may not be easy for all the ills of this world, but in each hurting place send your Spirit, that those who do have the power to effect the changes needed for justice, peace and honor may use their power for wellbeing of all. God of peace,

People: hear our prayers.

Leader: In this season of Advent, where many watch and wait, be with those who at this time wait by a hospital bedside, watch anxiously for results in exams and tests wait for news of an interview, watch for a loved one to return. May all who wait with anxiety find your peace, and all who watch with fearfulness be calmed by your steady heart. God of peace,

People: hear our prayers.

(Continued)

Leader: For ourselves, the hopes and hurts, the brightness and gloom that populate our waking and our sleeping hours. Help us to separate our needs from our wants, that we may discern where priorities in our ordered lives should lie. In a world where consumption rules and many have become accustomed to plenty, remind us of the privileges we take for granted, and the bounty we believe is our right, and not your gift. Soothe our spirits, and fill us with good things — the things which make for peace. God of peace,

People: hear our prayers.

Leader: We pray for those who lie close to our hearts: God of peace, hear our prayers.

Time of Silence

And now we pray as Jesus taught us, saying, "Our Father ...".

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 gratitude for all God has given us, let us return our offerings to God, passing the plates along the aisle as we remember that it takes all of us together to make this church strong.

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

Generous God, we thank you for all our blessings, and offer these gifts back to your service, that this church might continue to shine your light into the world. **Amen.**

(You may be seated)

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 3:1-6

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, ²during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, ⁴as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight. ⁵Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth, ⁶and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.' "

Leader: The Word of God for the people of God

People: **Thanks be to God**

SERMON

"Wonderful and Dangerous"

Pastor Mark Lyndaker-Studer

(Please stand if you are able)

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (from The Shorter Westminster Catechism: Q1, Q37, Q36)

Leader: What is the chief end of humanity?

People: **Humanity's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy God forever.**

Leader: What is sanctification?

People: **Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in our whole selves after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin and live toward righteousness.**

Leader: What are the benefits which, in this life, accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification?

People: **The benefits which, in this life, accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification are: assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Spirit, increase of grace, and persevering in all these to the end. Amen.**

HYMN NO. 5

"Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence"

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

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.



Prayer Concerns: Family of Iris Brown (mother of Lynne VanFossen)

Debbie & Bill Watson

Kim Roberts (sister of Laura Stillonovich)

John Gravel (friend of Laura Stillonovich)

Tom Murt (friend of Laura Stillonovich)

Geraldine Schultz (friend of Sue McOwen)

Faith Vernon (friend of Bill Watson)

Rich McNeeley (cousin of Sally Traubel)

Gloria Long (sister of Charlotte Rugel)

Ethan Chow (friend of Jen Kreischer)

Ian Smith (nephew of Dorothy Moritz)

Sheila Law (sister of Dorothy Moritz)

Pete Davis (friend of Mike O'Neill)

Sally Ault (family of Melissa Meade)

Thomas Ceneviva (friend of Laura Stillonovich)

Cyndee Carr (sister of Laura Stillonovich)

Karin Hart (sister of Laura Stillonovich)

Debbie and Bob Stokes (friends of Sandee Wilson)

Gloria Rossi (friend of Lisa Pearsall)

Michele Rouseau (friend of Wendy Wirsch)

Swarling Aguero (friend of Dalia Lucas)

Ongoing Concerns: Cathy Roushey

Leslie Bonner

Rina Mironas

Cathy Shaheen

David Rankin

Charles Sutton

Debbie Edwards

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. Deacons Dottie Kieffer & Jen Kreischer will deliver the flowers. If you are interested in donating pulpit flowers please contact Dorothy Smith at 215-343-1142.

ADVENT CHRISTMAS PARTY

We will celebrate our annual Advent Christmas Party TODAY at 4pm. There will be crafts, tree decorating, a catered dinner, a Christmas skit and singing by our children and youth, and SANTA CLAUS!! The dinner for this special event will be catered. To help cover the cost of dinner we ask that each family make a donation and bring Christmas cookies to share! We hope to see everyone there for this festive and fun occasion!

MEN'S GROUP NEXT MEETING

December 15, 6:00 PM

At NWPC (Lounge)

The next Men's Group meeting will be on Sunday, December 15th. We will be discussing Eugene Peterson's book *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction – Discipleship In An Instant Society*. There is no need to read the book for the Men's Group meetings. The Men's Group is a great opportunity to get to know other men at NWPC better, and to participate in discussing Bible themes as well as challenges we face in living a life of faith today. Please join us! For more information or any questions you have you can talk to Pastor Mark or Rick Rugel. Please let us know if you plan to join us so we know how many will be coming.

MISSION CORNER

3 of our mission projects are in PHILADELPHIA:

West Kensington Ministries--Crossroads in North Philadelphia--Oxford Circle in Frankford \$25.00 gift certificates can be purchased from TARGET or WALMART. The poverty level for all three missions is 60% and c.All3 have programs for children to help with their education and to keep them safe. They also have food distribution programs to help all the families, especially the elderly.

Inspired by the teachings of Jesus and the generous work of our congregation we CAN impact their world and give these struggling families a little bit of joy.

DEADLINE is now next Sunday December 15

WHOLYFIT

WholyFit is a women's ministry for mind, body and soul. We use gentle stretching and static poses to increase stability, strength and flexibility all while worshipping our Lord and Savior. All ladies, from youth to youth at heart are welcome. All body types and abilities are welcome. Even if you can only raise an arm, it would be a pleasure to worship with you. We meet every Tuesday in the Lloyd Rickner Auditorium from 7:00 - 8:00 pm. Our last meeting for 2024 will be Tuesday, November 26 and take the month of December off. We will resume class on Tuesday, January 7, 2025 and will be held from 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm going forward. Please contact Chelsea Rounds, certified WholyFit instructor, at Mrsrounds@gmail.com if you have any questions. Bless you and your family during this blessed season.

MEALS for our CODE BLUE GUESTS - DECEMBER 2024

December is around the corner and we are preparing for hosting our Code Blue guests. Your generosity as a congregation has provided hot and nourishing meals in the past, and the need continues to be great.

Please prayerfully consider the information below as you decide how you can help.

Food needs we still have for December 2024 Code Blue guests:

- 1) There are still 15 nights open for meals: 12/27 & 12/29
- 2) We also have openings for kitchen helpers: 12/20-12/29

Please call (215-715-5146) or email (jjhelsel@yahoo.com) me if you are interested in helping on any of these dates.

We will let you know if we need more help with our pantry as we go further into the month.

Volunteers will be contacted each morning by text, email or phone as to whether the shelter is open or closed each evening.

Thank you for all that you do!

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Please consider catching up on or increasing your 2024 contribution. Our giving for 2024 is lower than this time in 2023 and our expenses (as expected) are higher this year. The Session made the decision to reduce our personnel budget for 2025. We are hopeful we will not have to make any further reductions to our personnel or mission giving in 2025.

	Income		Expenses	Net Result
	<i>Member Contributions</i>	<i>Total Income</i>		
Anticipated 2024 Year End	500,000	625,526	664,339	(38,813)
YTD 2024 as of 11/30/24	429,242	548,765	602,137	(53,372)

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 1. 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 8 bulletin, please designate what the wording should be for you.

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.

(Signature)

THIS WEEK AT NESHAMINY

SUNDAY—Prayer Group 8:30 am Lounge

- Worship Service 9 am Sanctuary
- Food & Fellowship 10:15 am Auditorium
- Cantata Rehearsal 10:30 am Choir Room
- Mission Team Meeting 10:30 am Lounge
- Advent Christmas Party 4 pm Auditorium

MONDAY—Finance/Property Team Meeting 7 pm Lounge

WEDNESDAY—Sarah Circle 9:15 am Lounge

- Bible Study 10 am Auditorium

THURSDAY— Choir Rehearsal 7 pm Choir Room

SATURDAY—Cantata Rehearsal 10:45 am Choir Room

SUNDAY—Cantata Rehearsal 7:45 am Sanctuary

- Prayer Group 8:30 am Lounge
- Cantata Worship Service 9 am Sanctuary
- Food & Fellowship 10:15 am Auditorium
- Deacons Meeting 10:30 am Lounge
- Youth Group 6 pm Youth Room
- Men's Group 6 pm Lounge

WAYS TO GIVE



ONLINE:
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
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.