

Warren Wilson

Presbyterian Church

December 1, 2024



“Hope is...not the same as joy that things are going well, or a willingness to invest in enterprises that are obviously headed for early success, but rather, an ability to work for something because it is good, not just because it stands a chance to succeed. The more unpropitious the situation in which we demonstrate hope, the deeper that hope is. Hope is definitely not the same thing as optimism. It is not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something makes sense, regardless of how it turns out. In short, I think that the deepest and most important form of hope, the only one that can keep us above water and urge us to good works, and the only true source of the breathtaking dimension of the human spirit and its efforts, is something we get, as it were, from “elsewhere.” It is...this hope, above all, which gives us strength to live and continually try new things, even in conditions that seem as hopeless as ours do.’

Such is the hope of Advent, the hope that propels us onward in our journey, but our ‘elsewhere’ has a particular name, Jesus, and a particular human face, seen first at Bethlehem.”

- Václav Havel, the last president of Czechoslovakia,
as quoted by Bob Dunham, in *Expecting God’s Surprises*

Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church

SERVICE OF WORSHIP

1st Sunday of Advent

December 1, 2024 11:00 AM

GREETINGS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

*THE COMING OF THE LIGHT

Tacci Smith
& Izzy Presnell-Smith

The Gospel of John speaks of Christ as the true light coming into the world. In commemoration of that coming, we light candles for the four weeks leading to Christmas and reflect on the coming of Christ. The church has always used that language—the *coming* of Christ—because it speaks to a deep truth. Christ *is* coming. Christ is always coming, always entering a troubled world, a wounded heart. And so we light the first candle, the candle of hope, and dare to express our longing for peace, for healing, and the well-being of all creation.

Sung Response:

*O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.*

**Loving God, as we enter this Advent season,
we seek to open all the hidden places in our lives and memories
to the healing light of Christ.
Plant in us the creative power of hope
as we walk in the light of Christ's love.**

*HYMN 377

“I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light”
HOUSTON

1 I want to walk as a child of the light.
I want to follow Jesus.
God set the stars to give light to the world.
The star of my life is Jesus.

Refrain:

In him there is no darkness at all.
The night and the day are both alike.
The Lamb is the light of the city of God.
Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus. (Refrain)

2 I want to see the brightness of God.
I want to look at Jesus.
Clear Sun of righteousness, shine on my path,
and show me the way to the Father. (Refrain)

3 I'm looking for the coming of Christ.
I want to be with Jesus.
When we have run with patience the race,
we shall know the joy of Jesus. (Refrain)

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**Lord of all hopefulness,
You announce to us the day of salvation,
but we find ourselves consumed with the worries of this day.
You ask us to be vigilant in our watch for your kingdom,
but we are weary from so many years
of waiting for its fullness.
Forgive our distraction, our complacency, our moments of
despair.
Come to us again, Lord Jesus.
Fill us with hope. Restore us in love.**

Silent prayer

***ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

...in the name of Jesus, the resurrection and the life, let us
declare:

**Our stories are known; our sins are forgiven;
our work has just begun.**

***RESPONSE**

tune 110, BRING A TORCH

*Hope has come; a light in the darkness!
Hope shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.
See all heaven has come to proclaim it;
hear how their song of joy arises: Hope! Hope!
Born unto you, A Savior! Hope! Hope! Glory to God on high.*

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

A TIME FOR THE CHILD IN ALL OF US

Children and youth are invited to come forward.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Winn Legerton

FIRST READING

Jeremiah 33:14-16

ANTHEM Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending Arr. R.E. Martin

*Lo! He comes, with clouds descending, once for our salvation slain;
Thousand thousand saints attending swell the triumph of his train:
Alleluia! Alleluia! Christ the Lord returns to reign.*

*Every eye shall now behold him, robed in dreadful majesty
Those who set at nought and sold him, pierced, and nailed him to the tree,
Deeply wailing deeply wailing, deeply wailing, shall the true Messiah see.*

*Yea, Amen! Let all adore thee, high on thine eternal throne;
Savior, take the power and glory; claim the kingdom for thine own;
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Thou shalt reign, and thou alone. Amen.*

SECOND READING

Luke 21:25-36

SERMON

Margaret LaMotte Torrence

*HYMN 357

“The Days Are Surely Coming”

LLANGLOFFAN

1 The days are surely coming,
says God to all the earth,
when you will see my promise:
salvation come to birth.
My righteousness and justice
will spread throughout the land
and you will be delivered
by my almighty hand.

2 The days are surely coming,
says Christ, the promised one,
when you will read my warning
in moon and stars and sun.
Though earth and heaven tremble,
stand up and do not fear,
for I am your redeemer,
and I am drawing near.

3 The days are surely coming
when we will know at last
the fullness of God’s presence,
God’s promise, come to pass.
Then righteousness and justice
will spread throughout the land
and we will be delivered
by God’s almighty hand.

*AFFIRMATION (responsive) “Advent Credo” by Allan Boesak
Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa

It is not true that creation and the human family are doomed to
destruction and loss—

**This is true: For God so loved the world that He gave his only
begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish
but have everlasting life;**

It is not true that we must accept inhumanity and discrimination,
hunger and poverty, death and destruction—

**This is true: I have come that they may have life, and that
abundantly.**

It is not true that violence and hatred should have the last word,
and that war and destruction rule forever—

**This is true: Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given,
and the
government shall be upon his shoulder, his name shall be
called**

wonderful councilor, mighty God, the Everlasting, the Prince of peace.

It is not true that we are simply victims of the powers of evil who seek

to rule the world—

This is true: To me is given authority in heaven and on earth, and

lo I am with you, even until the end of the world.

It is not true that we have to wait for those who are specially gifted,

who are the prophets of the Church before we can be peacemakers—

This is true: I will pour out my spirit on all flesh and your sons and

daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions and

your old men shall have dreams.

It is not true that our hopes for liberation of humankind, of justice, of

human dignity of peace are not meant for this earth and for this history-

This is true: The hour comes, and it is now, that the true worshipers shall worship God in spirit and in truth.

So let us enter Advent in hope, even hope against hope.

Let us see visions of love and peace and justice.

Let us affirm with humility, with joy, with faith, with courage:

Jesus Christ—the life of the world.

SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

The congregation is invited to sing verses of the hymn "O Lord, How Shall I Meet You," incorporated into today's Table Prayer.

The Invitation

The Table Prayer

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

O Lord, how shall I meet you, how welcome you aright?

Your people long to greet you, my hope, my heart's delight!

O kindle, Lord most holy, a lamp within my breast

To do in spirit lowly all that may please you best.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

You breathed us into being; you named us as your own;

And when we wandered from you, you grieved our hearts of stone.

*You sent to us your prophets, your poets and your priests
Who told us of your mercy, the promised day of peace.*

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

*Love caused your incarnation; love brought you down to
me;*

*Your thirst for my salvation procured my liberty.
O love beyond all telling, that led you to embrace
In love, all loves excelling, our lost and fallen race.*

Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

*Pour out your breath upon us, and on this table spread,
That we might come to meet you in cup and broken bread.
And bind us to each other that we might live to see
Your grace in blind eyes opened and captives breaking free.*

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.**

Sharing a Taste of Home

*The bread is gluten-free; the juice is not fermented, with the hope that all
may freely participate.*

*When you come forward for communion, you will be offered a piece of
bread. You will then have two options for receiving juice: You may take
the bread and dip it in a common cup, or if you would prefer to have a
personal serving of juice, separate glass cups are available. Just indicate
to your server which you would prefer.*

Giving Thanks

Gracious God,

Truly you have met us here;

we have tasted your love,

and glimpsed your image reflected in our neighbor's.

Continue to burn in our hearts, we pray,

until we recognize your coming

wherever bread and hearts are broken.

For we pray in the name of Jesus, whose every breath was praise.

*You come, O Lord, with gladness, in mercy and goodwill,
to bring an end to sadness and bid our fears be still.
In patient expectation, we live for that great day
when your renewed creation your glory shall display.*

COMMISSION AND BLESSING

(responsive)

Take time, in the busyness of this season, for quiet reflection-
For the light of God's love is discernible everywhere.

**We will let ourselves be surprised by wonder,
And set aside time to offer quiet thanks.**

The good news of Advent is this:
Christ is coming. Christ is always coming.

**We will welcome Christ into our hearts.
We will let ourselves be guided by his ministry.
We will go forth from this place in hope.**

*HYMN 87

"Comfort, Comfort Now My People"

GENEVAN 42

1 "Comfort, comfort now my people;
tell of peace!" So says our God.

"Comfort those who sit in darkness
mourning under sorrow's load.

To my people now proclaim
that my pardon waits for them!
Tell them that their sins I cover,
and their warfare now is over."

2 For the herald's voice is crying
in the desert far and near,
calling us to true repentance,
since the reign of God is here.
O, that warning cry obey!
Now prepare for God a way.
Let the valleys rise in meeting
and the hills bow down in greeting.

3 Straight shall be what long was crooked,
and the rougher places plain.
Let your hearts be true and humble,
as befits God's holy reign.
For the glory of the Lord
now on earth is shed abroad,
and all flesh shall see the token
that God's word is never broken.

*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

*Please stand as you are able

CHURCH STAFF

Margaret LaMotte Torrence, Transitional Pastor
Ted Stewart, Interim Director of Music
Andrew Tripp, Church Administrator
Leslie Sayyar, Brent Roberts; Treasurers
Barbara Escalante, Bookkeeper

Liturgist: Winn Legerton
Coffee Hour Host: Sally Broughton
Elder of the Day: Natalie Daugherty

ANNOUNCEMENTS

STEWARDSHIP Stewardship season is underway. Materials are in the narthex. We are grateful for all the ways you show your support and love in this place.

ADULT EDUCATION CLASS All are welcome. We meet Sundays at 9:30 in the Adult Education class. Join us!

COMMUNITY JOYS AND CONCERNS: If you would like to add or update a prayer request, please contact the church office.

We celebrate: Aidan Saunders and the farm crew for creating last week's harvest display. ◦ a beautiful new piano in the Chapel thanks to the diligent work of Beth Meriwether, Ken Murchison, Brent Roberts, Wayne Smith, and most especially, Ted Stewart. We remember gratefully Steven Williams, beloved organist and choir director for more than 30 years, whose bequest made the purchase possible.

We remember in prayer: The family of Vernon Daugherty, Derron's father, following his death on November 17 ◦ Dina Taylor, Barbara Escalante's sister, having surgery in California on Monday, Dec 2, for a brain bleed. ◦ Wynee Bullerdick, daughter of Rodney and Sharon Lytle as she collaborates with her doctor to determine the cause of her illness. ◦ all who continue to be affected by loss caused by recent storms. In our congregation, we remember especially Andrew Tripp, Cindy and Dennis Riley, Jackie Wintle, Joyce Cucinella, and Bob, the father of Natalie's partner Jeff ◦ Donna Eagle Joslin, healing from wrist surgery. ◦ Amanda Branscombe, as she continues to recover from spinal fusion surgery ◦ Bill Christy, as he continues to heal following a heart transplant ◦ Susan Laney, receiving therapy at home ◦ Bubba Lytle, Rodney and Sharon's son, making excellent progress recovering from a serious motorcycle accident ◦ Thurman Slone, Joyce Cucinella's brother, now under Hospice care ◦ Carol Lee Joslin, Blake Joslin's mother, suffering from Alzheimer's ◦ Jackie Ligon Cole ◦ Pat Crumpler ◦ Martha Dugger ◦ Rick Garrison ◦ Houston Huggins (Beth Meriwether's brother) ◦ Erika Lytle ◦ Fran Roberts' sister-in-law, Linda Briggs ◦ Jon Hettrick and his

family ◦ **Marjorie Hettrick** ◦ **Shane Reece** (Nancy Garrison's son) ◦ **Pat Wilson's son, Kell**

HABITAT VOLUNTEER DAYS IN DECEMBER Volunteer work on Habitat House of Faith #4 in Arden will continue through Dec. 14. For more information, please talk to Larry Griswold or contact him at larrygris@gmail.com.

TOGATHER You are invited to join the *Togather* group which will meet on December 5 and 19 at 6:30 in the Chapel Parlor, for a time of sharing, contemplation, and prayer. Contact Beth at bethmeriwether@gmail.com.

A/V TRAINING We are building a team of folks who are available to run the soundboard and live stream for our Sunday morning services. If you're curious to know whether that might be a fit for you, training will be offered for **30-45 minutes after worship on December 15**.

AN INVITATION TO SINGERS Singers are invited to sing with the WWPC Chapel Choir during Advent and Christmas Season. No auditions. Just show up at choir rehearsals on Wednesdays 7:00-8:20 PM in the Choir Loft. (Sunday Morning Warm-up is 10:15-10:45 AM) Contact **Director Ted Stewart**, (816) 305-1038, stewart.smith@att.net with questions.

HURRICANE RELIEF Session has set up a **fund to provide aid to neighbors most affected by Hurricane Helene**. There are handouts in the narthex explaining these giving opportunities.

CHRISTMAS DECORATING We are decorating the Chapel on December 6, starting at 11:00 AM. Pizza and beverages will be provided. Please contact either Rachel Sparling (248) 762-0858 or Vicki Collins (828) 712-0251 if you will be helping.

WASSAIL Come enjoy Wassail on Dec. 8th and meet Rev. Dr. Laurie Furr-Vancini, our new Transitional Pastor (as of January 1). Bring finger foods (h'ors d'oeuvres) to share, Congregational Life will be serving the Wassail punch. All are welcome!

COOKIES AND CAROLS On December 15 at 4:00 we will celebrate a festive holiday tradition: Cookies and Carols! Enjoy delicious Christmas treats and join in singing some favorite Christmas songs with the Warren Wilson Community.

FAITH COMMUNITIES ORGANIZING FOR SANCTUARY

is re-forming to stand in solidarity with immigrant neighbors as challenges emerge in the coming months. If you would like to be part of this leadership team, contact Reverend Sara Wilcox at sara@landoftheskychurch.org. See Jamie Dale for more information.

CALLING CONGREGATIONAL MEETING The session has called a **congregational meeting immediately following worship on December 15, 2024**, for the purposes of electing two elders (class of 2027), and for electing officers.

Nominations are:

Elder (class of 2027): Chrisann Ohler and Leslie Saayar
Nominating Committee (class of 2025): Elaine Barnes, Barbara Griswold, and Rodney Lytle.

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Warren Wilson
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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WarrenWilsonPC



WarrenWilsonPresbyterianChurch



@WarrenWilsonPC

*At Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church we are mothers and fathers,
single and married, gay and straight, young and old, black and white,
prosperous and poor, uncertain and sure, broken and whole – and
everything in between. Together we are the many faces of humanity,
yet as a joyful, caring, and loving community of faith,
we are one in Christ!*