Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church

December 8, 2024



Through the heartfelt mercies of our God,
God's sunrise will break in upon us,
Shining on those in the darkness,
those sitting in the shadow of death,
Then showing us the way, one foot at a time,
down the path of peace.
-Isaiah 1:78-79 (The Message)

Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church

SERVICE OF WORSHIP
2nd Sunday of Advent
December 8, 2024 11:00 AM

GREETINGS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

MINUTE FOR MISSION Jamie Dale

PRELUDE

***THE COMING OF THE LIGHT** Mac Ware & Maeve Williams

Last Sunday we lit the first candle—the candle of hope. Today we light the second candle, the candle of peace. We light it knowing full well that peace is elusive, and in some parts of the world, almost completely absent. Yet in this season of Advent, we trust that God is never absent from God's beloved world. Even where there is war and discord, whether between countries, within families, or within our own hearts, God is present, offering new life.

Sung Response**:**
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.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

Loving God, in this time of preparation and planning,
We thank you for the hope and peace you offer.
We crave the creative power of hope.
We long for the peace that comes from justice.
Transform our hearts, that we may walk in the light of Christ.
Amen

***HYMN 106** "Prepare the Way, O Zion"
BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN

1 Prepare the way, O Zion,
your Christ is drawing near!
Let every hill and valley
a level way appear.
Greet One who comes in glory,
foretold in sacred story.
Refrain:
O blest is Christ who came
in God's most holy name.

2 He brings God's rule, O Zion;
he comes from heaven above.
His rule is peace and freedom,
and justice, truth, and love.
Lift high your praise resounding,
for grace and joy abounding.
Refrain:
O blest is Christ who came
in God's most holy name.

3 Fling wide your gates, O Zion;
your Savior's rule embrace,
and tidings of salvation
proclaim in every place.
All lands will bow rejoicing,
their adoration voicing.
Refrain:
O blest is Christ who came
in God's most holy name.

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION** Rev. Dr. Laurie Furr-Vancini

Witnessing God, you see the sorts of lives we lead.
Asked to share the gospel of hope and peace,
we often despair and languish in the minutia of life.
Given the chance to cry out for justice for others,
we watch the day's news, shaking our heads.
Invited to a life of community and worship,
we close in on ourselves.

Have mercy on us, God of grace,
until our hearts overflow with your love.
Transform us in and through the advent of your Son, our Lord.

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 FOR PEACE** sung to tune #180

Peace will come; a light in the darkness!
Peace will shine in the Bethlehem skies.
See all heaven has come to proclaim it;
hear how our song of joy arises: Peace! Peace!
Born unto you, A Savior! Peace! Peace! 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 Pat Levi

FIRST READING Malachi 3:1-4

ANTHEM What Sweeter Music Ralph Vaughan Williams

What sweeter music can we bring than a carol,
for to sing the birth of this our heavenly king?
We see him come, and know him ours,
who with his sunshine his showers
Turns all the patient ground to flowers,
turn the patient ground to flowers.

So we will give him, and bequeath
this holly and this ivy wreath,
to do him honor who's our king,
and Lord of all this reveling.
Dark and dull night, fly hence away
and give the honor to this day,
that sees December turn to May.
that sees December turn to May.

The darling of the world is come,
and fit it is we find a room to welcome him.
The nobler part of all the house here is the heart;
Awake the voice! Awake the string!
What sweeter music can we bring
to sing the birth of this our heavenly king?

SECOND READING Luke 1:68-79

SERMON Rev. Dr. Laurie Furr-Vancini
"Sing It, Zechariah"

***HYMN 109** "Blest Be the God of Israel"(Song of Zechariah)
MERLE'S TUNE

1 Blest be the God of Israel,
who comes to set us free;
who visits and redeems us,
who grants us liberty.
The prophets spoke of mercy,
of freedom and release;
God shall fulfill that promise
and bring the people peace.

2 God from the house of David
a child of grace has given;
a Savior comes among us
to raise us up to heaven.
Before him goes the herald,
forerunner in the way,
the prophet of salvation,
the harbinger of day.
3 On those who sit in darkness
the sun begins to rise,
the dawning of forgiveness
upon the sinner's eyes.
God guides the feet of pilgrims
along the paths of peace.
O bless our God and Savior
with songs that never cease!

***AFFIRMATION** A Brief Statement of Faith, PCUSA

In a broken and fearful world
the Spirit gives us courage
to pray without ceasing,
to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior,
to unmask idolatries in Church and culture,
to hear the voices of peoples long silenced,
and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.
In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit,
we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks
and to live holy and joyful lives,
even as we watch for Gods new heaven and new earth,
praying, "Come, Lord Jesus!"

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

***HYMN 83** "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"
STUTTGART

1 Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us;
let us find our rest in thee.

2 Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.

3 Born thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a king,
born to reign in us forever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.

4 By thine own eternal Spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all-sufficient merit
raise us to thy glorious throne.

***CHARGE** (responsive)

Let us take our encouragement from Christ,
that our joy may be complete.

We will share in the Spirit;
We will find consolation in love.

Let us practice a ministry of humility and compassion
For God is at work in us, empowering us.

We will welcome Christ into our hearts.
We will seek lives worthy of the Gospel.
We will go forth in hope and in peace.

***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: Pat Levi
Elder of the Day: Beth Meriwether

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: Sally Broughton and Toby Ives for hosting last week's reception in honor of **Ted Stewart.** ◦ **All who helped decorate our Chapel space,** including **Brent Roberts, John Bishop, Vicki and Don Collins,** and **Rachel Sparling** ◦ **Rachel Sparling** for the gift of two tables to aid in the serving of communion. ◦ **The Congregational Life Team** for hosting today's Wassail celebration ◦ 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,** recovering from surgery in California on December 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**

WASSAIL Stay after church today to enjoy Wassail and welcome Rev. Dr. Laurie Furr-Vancini, our new Transitional Pastor, and her husband, Jeff.

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

A/V TRAINING We are building a team of folks 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 the WWPC Chapel Choir for the Christmas Season. No auditions, just show up at choir rehearsals on Wednesdays 7:00 PM in the Choir Loft. Contact **Ted Stewart,** (816) 305-1038, stewart.smith@att.net.

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.

LOOKING FOR A HOUSE/PET SITTER? WWC student **Munashe Matumbi** won't be traveling home to Zimbabwe over the holidays, and would love to earn a little money. Call or text Munashe at 828-280-1058, if you know of an opportunity. Thanks!

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.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING The session has called a **congregational meeting immediately following worship on December 15, 2024**, for the purposes of electing officers.
Elder (class of 2027): **Chrisann Ohler** and **Leslie Saayar.**
Nominating Committee (class of 2025): **Elaine Barnes, Barbara Griswold,** and **Rodney Lytle.**
Nominations from the floor are in order as long as you have the permission of your nominee.

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!