Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church

December 29, 2024



Where the Light Begins

Perhaps it does not begin.
Perhaps it is always.

Perhaps it take a lifetime
to open our eyes, to learn to see
what has forever
shimmered in front of us—

The luminous line
of the map
in the dark,

the vigil flame
in the house
of the heart,

the love
so searing
we cannot keep
from singing,
from crying out
in testimony
and praise.

Perhaps this day
will be the mountain
over which
the dawn breaks.

Perhaps we
will turn our face toward it,
toward what has been always.

Perhaps our eyes
will finally open
in ancient recognition
willingly dazzled,
illuminated at last.

Perhaps this day
the light begins in us.

- Jan Richardson

Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church

SERVICE OF WORSHIP

1st Sunday of Christmas

December 29, 2024 11:00 AM

GREETINGS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

***CALL TO WORSHIP** Sally Broughton

We waited.
And imagined a savior.

We imagined power.
One like the world but stronger and on our side.

We imagined a king on a white horse wielding a sword.
We got a baby born in a stable among the livestock.

We imagined the work done for us
through the destruction of our enemies.
We received a baby who will teach us our calling
to seek reconciliation and to love expansively.

Praise be to God for the unexpected babe of Bethlehem.
Praise for the wisdom of love.

***HYMN 138** "Who Would Think that What Was Needed"
WHITE ROSETTES

1 Who would think that what was needed
to transform and save the earth
might not be a plan or army,
proud in purpose, proved in worth?
Who would think, despite derision,
that a child should lead the way?
God surprises earth with heaven,
coming here on Christmas Day.

2 Shepherds watch and wise men wonder;
monarchs scorn and angels sing;
such a place as none would reckon
hosts a holy helpless thing.
Stable beasts and by-passed strangers
watch a baby laid in hay;
God surprises earth with heaven,
coming here on Christmas Day.

3 Centuries of skill and science
span the past from which we move,
yet experience questions whether,
with such progress, we improve.
While the human lot we ponder,
lest our hopes and humor fray,
God surprises earth with heaven,
coming here on Christmas Day.

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Abundant God,
Forgive us for clinging so tightly to the gifts we know:
the people we love,
the work we do,
the measure of health we take for granted.

Teach us to live with open hearts,
offering gladly what we hold most dear
for the sake of your life in the world.

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** sung to tune #582

Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,
and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,
and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

World without end, without end. Amen.
World without end, without end. Amen.
World without end, without end. Amen.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

***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

FIRST READING Galatians 4:4-7

SECOND READING Luke 2:22-40

***HYMN 148** "Mary and Joseph Came to the Temple"
EVENING HYMN

1 Mary and Joseph
came to the temple
brought the boy Jesus,
offered him there.
People were waiting
wanting to greet him;
long had they sought him,
solace for care.

2 Anna had prayed there,
widowed, long waiting,
worshiping God by
day and by night.
Now she is praising,
filled with elation:
here is God's promise,
Christ is her light.

3 Simeon sings now:
God proffers blessing,
brilliantly gilding
dawn of his day.
Light in the darkness,
never extinguished,
Light of all nations,
light up our way.

SERMON Margaret LaMotte Torrence

SERVICE OF ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION,
Chrisann Ohler and Leslie Sayyar

STATEMENT ON ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION
AFFIRMATION OF FAITH
Do you believe in God, the Father?
I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

Do you believe in Jesus Christ?
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 was 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 again to judge the living and the dead.

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?
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.

CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS

QUESTION FOR THE CONGREGATION — Clerk of Session Sally Broughton

Do we, as members of the church, accept these elders, chosen by God through the voice of this congregation, to lead us in the way of Jesus Christ?

We do.

Do we agree to encourage them, to respect their decisions, and to follow as they guide us, serving Jesus Christ, who alone is head of the Church?

We do.

PRAYER OF ORDINATION

DECLARATION AND CHARGE

***HYMN 136** "Go, Tell It on the Mountain"
GO TELL IT

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

1 While shepherds kept their watching
o'er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the heavens
there shone a holy light. (Refrain)

2 The shepherds feared and trembled
when lo! above the earth
rang out the angel chorus
that hailed our Savior's birth. (Refrain)

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

***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: Sally Broughton
Elder of the Day: Jim Storey
Coffee Hour Host: Elizabeth Cook

ANNOUNCEMENTS

STEWARDSHIP Stewardship Commitments have continued to arrive, and the session is grateful to share that at the time of printing, **we have received commitments of $210,956 toward our $224,000 challenge goal.** You are a remarkably generous congregation. The session will not finalize the budget unti January, and would welcome last minute additions, with the hope of moving even closer to that goal!

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING This annual offering is being collected through December. Offering envelopes are available in the entryway.

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: New member Dennis Riley, and his wife, Cindy, who is an ordained pastor in the Evangelical Covenant Church ◦ encouraging results in **Jon Hettrick's** most recent round of medical tests ◦ new roofs, a newly refurbished fellowship hall, and a new piano to offer in service to God and our community

We remember in prayer: The family of **Thurman Slone**, **Joyce Cucinella's brother,** following his death on December 22 ◦ The family of **Margaret (Judy) Laney, John's sister,** following her death on December 15 ◦ The family of **Carol Lee Joslin, Blake Joslin's mother**, following her death on December 10 ◦ **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 ◦ **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**

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.

SPECIAL COFFEE HOUR TODAY Join us after worship today as **Congregational Life hosts a special coffee hour thanking Margaret** for her service as our transitional pastor.

EPIPHANY STARS We hope you will make plans to attend our **Epiphany service on January 5 at 11:00 AM, as we welcome our new transitional pastor, the Rev. Dr. Laurie Furr-Vancini!** We will receive Epiphany stars during the service, as we celebrate the conclusion of the Christmas season.

BOOK GROUP The Warren Wilson Book Group will hold its first meeting of 2024 at noon on January 9 in the Church Parlor. Bring your lunch and enjoy some fellowship from 12-12:30. At 12:30 Carolyn will lead our discussion of ***Yankee Stranger*** by Elswyth Thane. So if one of your resolutions is to read more in 2025 please join us! New members are always welcome.

END OF YEAR GIFTS If you plan to make a year-end gift, please note these deadlines. To have your gifts counted as 2024 income, you must postmark your checks (or deliver them to the church) by December 31. For online gifts, the Presbyterian Foundation must process the payment by December 31.

Cover Image by Roland Larssen, *Unsplash*
Call to Worship by Tim Graves, https://liturgybits.wordpress.com/

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!