

Willow Springs Sunday Worship Dec. 4, 2022 9:30 am

Simulcast on Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4743450556>

Meeting ID: 474 345 0556 Dial by your location +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Hosted by Elaine Good

Advent 2: Prepare the way of the Lord Focus - In a world where power holds sway, the Lord will judge differently. We are called to prepare the way for this new kind of ruler. This calls for repentance and truth-telling.

Welcome and Call to worship – Carol Zehr

Leader: A branch shall come forth from the stump of Jesse;
its root shall bear fruit.

People: **May we be ready, O Lord, ready to be fruit bearers of your harvest,
bringing forth the fruit of dwelling, longing, unity, and peace.**

Leader: Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on us.

People: **Renew our spirit, stand as a banner before us,
bright as morning glory.**

Leader: Prepare the way for new life that emerges in and through you,
life that ripples out to your people, into all nations.

All: *In you there is glorious rest.*

Candle-lighting liturgy

Leader: John the Baptist proclaimed,
“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

People: **Prepare the way of the Lord,
make God’s paths straight.**

“O Come, O Come, Immanuel,” verses 1 and 2 (*Voices Together* 210)

Candle Lighting

Leader: As we prepare, we light this candle as a sign of peace.

People: **Bring your restoration to your people, we pray.**

Songs – Comfort, Comfort, O My People VT#212

God of Grace and God of Glory VT#716

Children’s time – Beth Gerig

Focus: A shepherd ponders how to prepare the way for the Messiah.

Scripture: Isaiah 10:1-3, 33-34; 11:1-10, Matthew 3:1–3, 11-12

Sermon: Upheaval and a Stump with New Life!

Song: Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus VT#218

Sharing/Pastoral prayer

After prayer times “Lord, in your mercy” respond with “hear our prayer.”

Offering Song

Announcements Consider a time slot to help with Children's Sunday School over the next quarter. Contact Carol Gale.

A Holiday Concert – PHS Auditorium this afternoon, 3 pm, with the Bureau County Chorus and The Princeton Community Band.

December 12-14 **MCC Meat Canning** in Freeport. Please contact Cal if you would like to help out.

January 7/8 **Young Adult Retreat**

Sending May you go out in peace, preparing the way, as people in the story of God's restoration.

Online giving option: <https://tinyurl.com/donateWSMC>

Masks are encouraged but no longer required in our building. If you have Covid-like symptoms, please stay home and join by Zoom. Thank you for your consideration of others.

Isaiah 10 Woe to those who make unjust laws,
to those who issue oppressive decrees,
²to deprive the poor of their rights
and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people,
making widows their prey
and robbing the fatherless.
³What will you do on the day of reckoning,
when disaster comes from afar?
To whom will you run for help?
Where will you leave your riches?
⁴Nothing will remain but to cringe among the captives
or fall among the slain.
Yet for all this, his anger is not turned away,
his hand is still upraised.
³³See, the Lord, the Lord Almighty,
will lop off the boughs with great power.
The lofty trees will be felled,
the tall ones will be brought low.
³⁴He will cut down the forest thickets with an ax;
Lebanon will fall before the Mighty One.

Isaiah 11 A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.
²The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—
the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and of might,
the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord—
³and he will delight in the fear of the Lord.
He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,
or decide by what he hears with his ears;
⁴but with righteousness he will judge the needy,
with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.
He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth;
with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.
⁵Righteousness will be his belt
and faithfulness the sash around his waist.
⁶The wolf will live with the lamb,
the leopard will lie down with the goat,

the calf and the lion and the yearling together;
and a little child will lead them.

⁷ The cow will feed with the bear,
their young will lie down together,
and the lion will eat straw like the ox.

⁸ The infant will play near the cobra's den,
and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest.

⁹ They will neither harm nor destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord
as the waters cover the sea.

¹⁰ In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his resting place will be glorious.

Matthew 3 John the Baptist Prepares the Way

In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea ² and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." ³ This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: "A voice of one calling in the wilderness,

'Prepare the way for the Lord,
make straight paths for him.'"

¹¹ "I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹² His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire."