

Willow Springs Sunday Worship Dec. 18, 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)

Co-Hosted by Elaine Good

Advent 4: RESTORATION IS NEAR - Do not be afraid

Focus - God has promised to restore us and has acted in Jesus to further God's plan of restoration. Because of God's promise, we can act by asking for what we need and by stepping out in faith.

Welcome and Call to worship – Karla Stoltzfus Detweiler

Call to worship

Leader: Behold! Do not be afraid; God is with us.
God is our strength and our salvation!

People: Lord, we stand in your presence in faith, not fear.

Leader: God will send angels to keep watch over you,
to comfort you, to keep you.

**People: Lord, our strong hope is built on your unfailing love.
Our hearts yield to you and trust in your transforming power.**

All: Praise ye the Lord!

Candle-lighting liturgy

Leader: We cry out for restoration, we call upon God to give us life.

People: Do not be afraid, says the Lord. I have promised to be with you.

“O Come, O Come, Immanuel,” verses 1 and 4 (VT 210)

Leader: As we hold fast to God's promise, we light this candle as a sign of our joy.

All: Bring your restoration to your people, we pray.

Songs

Children's time – Beth Gerig

Focus: We all face different fears, but God is with us.

Scripture: Psalms 80:1-3, Isaiah 7:10-16, Matthew 1:18-25

Sermon: Immanuel: A Great and Safe Trip

Song

Sharing/Pastoral prayer

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

Offering Song

Announcements Join our **Christmas - Sing-a-long, play-a-long**, THIS afternoon, 4:00 pm at the church. Bring your voice and/or a musical instrument to join in celebrating Christmas in music.

We have an **opportunity to serve** the HS and Jr High groups from Living Water Community Church, Chicago, in travel to Menno Haven's Winter Retreats, January 13-15 and 20-22. Could you offer to give them a ride from the Princeton Amtrak to MH Friday evening or Sunday Noon? Please contact Cal.

Thanks to all who volunteered **to help** with Children's Sunday School over the next quarter.

For the **first quarter of our fiscal year** our expenses have lagged offering by \$3,500. Thanks for your continued generosity and consideration of extra, year-end giving.

This quarter we highlight the **ministries of MCC** with their impact around the world. Thanks to the 6 people from Willow Springs volunteered with MCC Meat Canning in Freeport this week. So far, Freeport Mennonite Church is short on donations covering the meat by \$10,000. Anyone who wants to donate can write "Meat Canning" on the memo of a check.

Do you or someone you know love touching the soil? Are you longing to help restore the health of our planet? **Hungry World Farm has opportunities for 3-4 farm interns** to join us for this coming season. Interns will learn about regenerative agriculture--soil health, annual and perennial crop systems, intensive grazing and various farming practices through working the soil, tending animals, field trips, and books. Find details on our website: <https://www.hungryworldfarm.com/opportunities#interns> Emily H, a former HWF intern says, "I learned so much about the diverse movement called regenerative agriculture. It brought me joy to contribute to the living landscape at Hungry World Farm." Please help us spread the word and share this announcement with someone you think could be interested!

CALENDAR

December 25 Christmas Sunday Worship – 9:30 am.

December 31 New Year's Eve Candle Light Communion, 7:30

January 7/8 Young Adult Retreat at Willow Springs.

Sending May you go out in joy, courageously trusting in God's promise of 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 7 ¹⁰ Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, ¹¹ "Ask the Lord your God for a sign, whether in the deepest depths or in the highest heights."

¹² But Ahaz said, "I will not ask; I will not put the Lord to the test."

¹³ Then Isaiah said, "Hear now, you house of David! Is it not enough to try the patience of humans? Will you try the patience of my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. ¹⁵ He will be eating curds and honey when he knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, ¹⁶ for before the boy knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, the land of the two kings you dread will be laid waste.

Psalm 80

¹ Hear us, Shepherd of Israel,

you who lead Joseph like a flock.

You who sit enthroned between the cherubim,

shine forth ² before Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh.

Awaken your might; come and save us.

³ Restore us, O God; **make your face shine on us,**
that we may be saved.

Matthew 1:18-25

¹⁸ This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

²⁰ But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).

²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵ But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.