

Willow Springs Worship, Sunday, December 3, 2023. 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

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT *How will we know . . . how long?* In our Scriptures, we hear the stories of those who have been waiting, waiting, waiting to hear from God, who have felt the silence of God as they long for restoration, for vindication, for hope. We, too, have been those who wait. When we watch the news, when we hear of wars and rumors of war, when children don't have enough to eat, when cancers and illnesses impact lives, we cry out with our spiritual ancestors, "How long, O Lord?" How long must we wait?

The answer is not forthcoming, yet we know: God is with us in the waiting.

Welcome and Call to worship – Esther Johnson

Leader: O God, tear open the heavens and come down
so that the mountains would quake at your presence!

High voices: No one has heard,

Low voices: no ear has perceived,

**People: no eye has seen any God besides you,
who works for those who wait for you.**

Leader: No one knows when the time will come.

People: How long must we wait?

(pause) Lighting of Advent candle

All: Together we wait.

Songs - Phil Kaufmann

Children's time – Beth Gerig

Drama - Pam and Phil Kaufmann

Scriptures - Isaiah 64:1-9, Mark 13:24-37

Sermon - Waiting and . . . More Waiting

Sharing/Pastoral prayer After prayer times "Lord, in your mercy" respond with "hear our prayer."

Song

Announcements:

Happy Birthday! " Bring your visiting downstairs today after church to help Doris Bachman celebrate her upcoming birthday on Dec. 5. by sharing in her birthday cake."

After the birthday celebration time consider **helping to decorate** parts of our building for Advent.

The family of Merle and Joy Sears would like to let you know that they will be celebrating 65 years of marriage on December 6th and will be having a card shower for them. Please send cards to:

Merle and Joy Sears, Courtyard Estates, 100 Courtyard Blvd, Bradford, IL 61421

MCC Meat Canning at Freeport Mennonite Church, December 11-14. Some of us plan to go on Thursday. Talk to Cal or Beth if you would like to car pool. Please register your time to help at the Freeport Mennonite Church website.

We pass the globe banks as a reminder of all of us doing our part in world hunger. **The 50 Cent offering** will be shared with the Bureau County Food Pantry and Mennonite Central Committee. Children can drop coins in the globe bank as they walk to the Children's time. Adults can place their offering in the bank before or after the worship service.

Our **church building desperately needs a new roof** sooner than later. A contract has been signed for a new steel, hidden fastener roof to last for decades to come! If you would like to give some lead gifts to the project, please talk to Phil. We will be sending out letters sharing about an opportunity to give to many previously connected to Willow Springs as well.

CALENDAR

December 6 – Church Board Meeting

December 10 – Second Sunday of Advent

December 11-14 MCC Meat Canning Freeport

Sending:

Leader: Together we wait.

People: How long must we wait?

Leader: No one knows when the time will come.

So, go! Keep alert, strengthened by God's faithfulness to you.

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

Isaiah 64:1-9

Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down,
that the mountains would tremble before you!

²As when fire sets twigs ablaze
and causes water to boil,

come down to make your name known to your enemies
and cause the nations to quake before you!

³For when you did awesome things that we did not expect,
you came down, and the mountains trembled before you.

⁴Since ancient times no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,

no eye has seen any God besides you,
who acts on behalf of those who wait for him.

⁵You come to the help of those who gladly do right,
who remember your ways.

But when we continued to sin against them,
you were angry.

How then can we be saved?

⁶All of us have become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags;
we all shrivel up like a leaf,
and like the wind our sins sweep us away.

⁷No one calls on your name
or strives to lay hold of you;
for you have hidden your face from us
and have given us over to our sins.

⁸Yet you, Lord, are our Father.

We are the clay, you are the potter;
we are all the work of your hand.

⁹Do not be angry beyond measure, Lord;
do not remember our sins forever.

Oh, look on us, we pray,
for we are all your people.

Mark 13:24-37

²⁴“But in those days, following that distress,
“the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give its light;

²⁵the stars will fall from the sky,
and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.’

²⁶“At that time people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. ²⁷And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens.

²⁸“Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. ²⁹Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that it is near, right at the door. ³⁰Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. ³¹Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

³²“But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. ³⁴It’s like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with their assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch.

³⁵“Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back—whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. ³⁶If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. ³⁷What I say to you, I say to everyone: ‘Watch!’”