

Willow Springs Worship, Sunday, December 10, 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

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT While we may sometimes feel discouraged or uncertain about when or how God will act, like those in our Scriptures, we are called to live and move in the world as God's people. Even as we wonder "How long?," we begin to ask "What shall we do while we wait?"

Welcome and Call to worship – Esther Johnson

Leader: Do not ignore this one fact, beloved,
that with God one day is like a thousand years,
and a thousand years are like one day.

High voices: God is not slow, as some think of slowness,

Low voices: but is patient with us,

People: not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance.

Leader: The word of our God will stand forever.

People: How shall we live while we wait for salvation?

(pause) Lighting of the Advent Candles

All: *Together we wait.*

Songs - Phil Kaufmann

Children's time – Connie Krabill

Drama - Pam and Phil Kaufmann

Scriptures – Isaiah 40:1-11, Mark 1:1-8, 2 Peter 3:8-15a

Sermon - Preparation in God's Peace

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

Song

Announcements:

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 on Thursday. 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. Find the letters in your mailbox.

CALENDAR

December 11-14 MCC Meat Canning Freeport

Dec. 17 Third Sunday of Advent

Dec. 20 Elders' Meeting

Dec. 31 Candlelight Communion Service, 7:30 pm

Sending: Leader: Together we wait.

People: God is patient with us, but how do we prepare while we're waiting?

Leader: Go, beloved, and while you wait for these things, strive to be found by God at peace. Do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God.

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

Isaiah 40:1-11

Comfort for God's People

Comfort, comfort my people,
says your God.

Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and proclaim to her
that her hard service has been completed,
that her sin has been paid for,
that she has received from the Lord's hand
double for all her sins.

A voice of one calling:
"In the wilderness prepare
the way for the Lord;
make straight in the desert
a highway for our God.

Every valley shall be raised up,
every mountain and hill made low;
the rough ground shall become level,
the rugged places a plain.

And the glory of the Lord will be revealed,
and all people will see it together.
For the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

A voice says, "Cry out."
And I said, "What shall I cry?"

"All people are like grass,
and all their faithfulness is like the flowers of the field.

The grass withers and the flowers fall,
because the breath of the Lord blows on them.
Surely the people are grass.

The grass withers and the flowers fall,
but the word of our God endures forever."

You who bring good news to Zion,
go up on a high mountain.
You who bring good news to Jerusalem,
lift up your voice with a shout,
lift it up, do not be afraid;
say to the towns of Judah,
"Here is your God!"

See, the Sovereign Lord comes with power,
and he rules with a mighty arm.
See, his reward is with him,
and his recompense accompanies him.
He tends his flock like a shepherd:
He gathers the lambs in his arms
and carries them close to his heart;
he gently leads those that have young.

Mark 1:1-8

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

1 The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah,[a] the Son of God, 2 as it is written in Isaiah the prophet:

"I will send my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way"—3

"a voice of one calling in the wilderness,
'Prepare the way for the Lord,
make straight paths for him.'"

4 And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 5 The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. 6 John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. 7 And this was his message: "After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. 8 I baptize you with[e] water, but he will baptize you with[f] the Holy Spirit."

2 Peter 3:8-15

8 But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. 9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.

11 Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives 12 as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. 13 But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.

14 So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him. 15 Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him.