

Willow Springs Worship

December 22, 2024 9:30 a.m.

Welcome and Call to Worship – Esther

Call to worship - based on Luke 1:26–38

Leader: The Lord is with us, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Can you conceive it?

Don't say, "It's all relative."

People: It's real! It's right now! It's right here!

Leader: Come young, come old.

Let us worship in the name of Jesus,

All: for nothing will be impossible with God!

Candlelighting – Sarah F. and Deb

Reader 1: Mary was told that she would be the mother to the promised Messiah.

Reader 2: And she responded, "I am the Lord's servant. Let it be with me just as you have said."

Reader 1: With the courage of Mary, we can accept the journey ahead of us.

Reader 2: But we do not need to walk it alone.

Reader 1: We need the support of others.

(Candlelighting of four Advent candles)

All: With Christ as our center, we join hands with others, walking together on the journey.

Songs – Phil Kaufmann

Children's time – Tarik Khesghi

Scriptures – Luke 1:26-45, Isaiah 12:1-6

Sermon – Karla Stoltzfus Detweiler

Monologue: *Dawning Joy*

Song – VT #222 My Soul Proclaims with Wonder

Sharing and prayer – Elvin Krabill

Song

Announcements

Sending Blessing

May Jesus be nurtured, and born, and grow in our lives

so that he would find a home with us, we would be at home with him,

and the world would be blessed

to see and know and love this

Jesus—*God-with-us*. Amen.

Sending Song

Calendar

Dec. 29 Input by Sr. Glenna Czachor

Dec. 31 New Year's Eve Service, time TBD

Jan. 2 Elders meeting, 7:00 pm

Jan. 5 Sharing by WS people

Thank you to Karla Stoltzfus Detweiler for bringing the message today!

Together on the Journey: This week's Advent theme is "Embodying God's Spirit: Who Lends a Hand?" Since God exemplifies relationship and covenant, we can trust God to provide companions for the journey. The strength found in community is its own mystery; like a rope of cords braided together, the Spirit entwines us with companions to give us energy, steadiness, and joy as we journey together.

Connie and Elvin will be traveling in January and will meet up with Fionah. A Christmas holiday page will be circulated through each side of the sanctuary today so that everyone who wishes may write her a message of a sentence or two. If the front side of the page fills up, use the back side. Be sure to sign both your first and last names. The last person on each side of the sanctuary should leave the papers and clipboards on the last bench to be picked up after the service. Thanks!

We are invited to the Tiskilwa Bible Church's Christmas Eve service at 5:00 pm on the 24th.

12/17 transitional pastor update: IMC minister Bryan Miller has heard back from a potential candidate who has said no to exploring this

position. The next step is for Bryan to meet with our church leadership after New Year's.

For half an hour following the service, the Pine Room (near the library) will be open for sharing and prayer. All are welcome to participate.

January 21, 2025 will mark the 500th anniversary of the first re-baptism event that started the Anabaptist movement. There will be various commemoration events across the broader church. Jacob Landis is exploring having some events across the northern Illinois region. Please let Jacob or Anna Zehr know if you would like more information and have interest in helping plan events.

Willow Springs Missional Giving emphasis for Nov./Dec. is Mennonite Mission Network (MMN). You can give to MMN's general fund by writing a check to Willow Springs and **putting MMN on the memo line**. You can also give directly to the many different MMN projects and partners through their website, including the Center for Justice and Peace in Ivory Coast. Thank you for supporting organizations ministering to many.

Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) volunteers are in western North Carolina responding to the impacts of Hurricane Helene with equipment to move debris, mud, and downed trees. MDS is accepting donations for the recovery effort. Visit [MDS.org](https://www.mds.org) to see the latest volunteer needs or to make a donation. Check donations can be mailed to Mennonite Disaster Service, 583 Airport Road, Lititz, PA 17543. Write "Hurricane Helene" on the memo line. Continue to pray for the people impacted by storms and for the volunteers as they respond.

If pastoral care is needed, please contact an Elder: Dale Bachman, Ellen Davis-Zehr, Pam Kaufmann, or Elvin Krabill

Luke 1:26-45 The Birth of Jesus Foretold

26 In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, 27 to a virgin pledged to be married

to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. 28 The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

29 Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. 30 But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. 31 You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, 33 and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

34 "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

35 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called [a] the Son of God. 36 Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. 37 For no word from God will ever fail."

38 "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

Mary Visits Elizabeth

39 At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, 40 where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. 41 When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. 42 In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! 43 But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44 As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. 45 Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!"