**Southminster Presbyterian Church**

**3rd Sunday of Advent**

**December 11, 2022**

**9:30 a.m.**

Find the link for the service on one of these sites:

1) our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/SouthminsterGlenEllyn/>
2) our web site: <https://www.southminsterpc.org/worship-videos>
3) our YouTube channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPgWICngOvkmR1OXgCG_wiA/videos>

If the video feed is interrupted during the service, we will continue to record and then post the full video on Facebook and our web site as soon as possible.

 Gathering Music: *O Lord, How Shall I Meet You?;*  *Savior of the Nations, Come; The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came*

Our Photo Story today is “Christmas Lights.”

 Welcome, Announcements, and Moment for Mission

  Lighting the Advent Wreath (Isaiah 35:1)

 Leader: As the Lord says, “The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad…”

 **All: We light these candles as a sign of the coming light of Christ.**

 Hymn 314:  *Longing for Light, We Wait in Darkness* (verses 1, 4)

 *(Christ, Be Our Light)*

 Prelude

 Call to Worship (Isaiah 35:1)

 Leader: The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
 the desert shall rejoice and blossom;

 **People:** **Like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly** **and rejoice with joy and singing.**

 **All: Let us walk in the light of the Lord.**

 Hymn: *Shine on Us*  (all verses) pg. 36, blue supplement

 Prayer of Confession: (unison)

**God of the future, you are coming in power to bring all nations under your rule. We confess that we have not expected your kingdom. We accept lies as truth and refuse your justice and peace. In your mercy, forgive us and empower us by your Holy Spirit to seek things that will endure when Christ comes to judge the world. Amen.**

 (Time of silence for personal prayer and confession)

 The Good News of Jesus Christ (Isaiah 40:4-5)

 Leader: Every valley is lifted up; every mountain made low.
 Now the glory of the Lord is revealed,
 for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

 **All: In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!
 Thanks be to God.**

 Response 84: *Creator of the Stars of Night* (verse 1)

**Creator of the stars of night,
Your people’s everlasting light,
O Christ, redeemer of us all,
We pray you, hear us when we call.
Amen.**

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 The Passing of the Peace

 Word with Children Blair Baldwin

 Children worshiping in the sanctuary, please come forward.

 *Jesus Loves Me*

**Jesus loves me! This I know,
For the Bible tells me so.
Little ones to him belong.
They are weak, but he is strong.**

**Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.**

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 Prayer for Illumination

 Scripture Lessons: Isaiah 35:1-7  Pew Bible, p. 663 (O.T.)

 Isaiah 35:8-10 Pew Bible, p. 663 (O.T.)

 Sermon: “On a Dark Desert Highway”

 Singing What We Believe/Affirmation of Faith
 Hymn 71: *Surely It Is God Who Saves Me* (all verses)

 Prayers of the People and the Lord’s Prayer

 Leader: Lord, in your mercy,

 **People**: **hear our prayers.**

**The Lord’s Prayer:**

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come,
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into
temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power
and the glory, forever. Amen.**

Offering of Ourselves and Our Gifts

[The offering plate is at the back of the sanctuary. Please leave your gift or pledge
in the plate on your way into or out of worship.]

 Offertory: *Safe Within Your Arms* Mark Hayes

 Response: *Longing for Light, We Wait in Darkness* Hymnal #314, verse 5

**Many the gifts, many the people,
Many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
Making your kingdom come.
Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.**

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 Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication

 Hymn 87: *Comfort, Comfort Now My People* ( all verses)

 Hymn 106: *Prepare the Way, O Zion* (all verses)

 Charge and Benediction

 Leader: Now go and serve the Lord,

 **All: For we are blessed to be a blessing!
 Alleluia, amen!**

 Postlude

**Participants and Technical Crew**

Pastor Wendy Boden
Liturgist: Lynn Ferino
Greeter/Fellowship: Caroline Linde
Musicians: Tom Anderson, Victor King, Southminster Choir
Advent Wreath: the Birchalls
Word with Children: Blair Baldwin
Worship Associate: David Kozich
Tech support: Chris Kozich, Blair Nelson

Flowers today are from Sue Knisely in memory of her father, Howie Duell.

If you are present for worship, following the service and the meeting, you are invited by the deacons to gather for **in-person fellowship** in the narthex. Coffee and bottled beverages will be served; masks and social distancing are at your discretion.

If you are online, we’re glad to have you! Note that we no longer offer Zoom fellowship.
 **Sunday Morning Adult Ed. Bible Study, 11:15 a.m.:** We’ve switched from using Zoom to meeting via Google Meet. Join us here: [https://meet.google.com/fna-eojg-uye](https://meet.google.com/fna-eojg-uye%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)If you’re already at church, join Blair with his computer in the library.

You are invited to join us on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/SouthminsterGlenEllyn/>), where we have a live sharing of “**Heart to Heart**” with Pastor Wendy Boden at 4:20 p.m. most weeks Tuesday through Friday.

Even though we have returned to in-person worship, we will also continue to be live on **Sunday morning for worship** at 9:30 a.m. (slideshow beginning at 9:15)
at <https://www.facebook.com/SouthminsterGlenEllyn/>
*If for any reason the feed falters, rest assured that a recording will be posted to Facebook and You Tube as soon as possible.*

You can also find links to recordings of the weekday sessions, special services, and Sunday worship posted on our web site: <https://www.southminsterpc.org/worship-videos> or by going to our YouTube channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPgWICngOvkmR1OXgCG_wiA/videos>

**Photo Stories/PowerPoints help us feel connected!**Photo Stories/PowerPoints help us prepare for worship, connect with one another, and make sure that our at-home people get both sound and sight. You’re invited to share your photos for these dates:
 **December 18: “Christmas Trees”** Send us your photos by this Thursday, Dec. 15.
 **December 25: “Nativity Scenes”** Send photos by Thursday, Dec. 22.
 **January 1, 2023: “Winter Nature Scenes”** Send photos by Thursday, Dec. 29.
**Send photos to our new dedicated email address, just for photos:** **PhotoStory@Southminsterpc.org****.** *Please include the date and Photo Story/PowerPoint title for which your photos are to be used.*

**Notes from Blair Nelson:**

**Adult Education**: Matthew’s gospel was the most influential to early Christians, and the Sermon on the Mount set the standard of how to live as a citizen of God’s kingdom. Join us for our Adult Bible Study as we work at being citizens of God’s kingdom, too. We meet on Sundays 11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m. in the Library/Parlor or via the Google Meet link here: <https://meet.google.com/fna-eojg-uye>. In December we will meet every Sunday except Christmas Day.

**Youth:** We will have some Christmassy **Pizza and Games** today from 4:00-6:00 p.m. Be sure to let Blair N. know that you are coming, if you have not already. We will share a meal, share some fun, and think Christmassy thoughts. You can’t beat that!

Our **Christmas Program** will be in worship on December 18. We could use a couple more readers. Contact Blair N. if you are interested.

**Presbyterian Women’s Christmas Salad Luncheon is next Sunday, December 18**
Next Sunday, December 18, is the **women’s annual Christmas Salad Luncheon** in Fellowship Hall at 11:30 a.m. All women are invited! The signup sheet is posted on the bulletin board outside the parlor. ***Please sign up by Thursday, December 15!*** (If you’re not going to be in the building in time to sign up, call the office at 630-469-9149 and leave a message; Barb will add your name.) Bring your salad to share and store it in the downstairs refrigerator, or go home after church and get it, but please join us. Karen Archbold and her daughters will delight us with Christmas music, and we will enjoy the fellowship of our church sisters. Drinks will be provided. A free will offering will be taken to cover the cost of the entertainment.

**From the Worship Ministry**
Join us for these special worship services:
 - If you are looking for a quiet prayerful time of reflection or know a friend who might
 benefit, please join us on **Wednesday, December 21, at 7:30 p.m.** for our **Longest
 Night service**. Refreshments will be served after the service. (This service will not
 be streamed but will be recorded and can be watched here: our web site
 <https://www.southminsterpc.org/worship-videos> or our YouTube channel:
 <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPgWICngOvkmR1OXgCG_wiA/videos>.)

 - **Christmas Eve** service (**Saturday, December 24**) - **new time: 4:30 p.m.**, with
 familiar Scripture readings, carols, choir, and the traditional candlelighting.

 - **Christmas Day**, **December 25,** is on Sunday this year. Please join us at our usual
 Sunday worship time: 9:30 a.m. We will be serving cocoa and cider while we sing
 many of our favorite carols. Attire is casual- Christmas sweaters and PJs!

***Both Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services will be live streamed and will also be recorded and available on our website and You Tube channel – the links are above.***

Thanks to everyone who ordered poinsettias to beautify the sanctuary for Christmas. Please take them home after services on Sunday, December 25, or pick them up in the narthex on Monday, December 26, from 10-11:00 a.m. (Sarah Allen will be at church.) If unable to pick up, please arrange for someone else to do so.

**Flowers for 2023**: Look for the sign-up sheet that will be posted in the Narthex. The florist we have used for years is under new management, and we don’t yet know what that might mean. For now, the price stays the same: $35. When you sign up, please write in your name and to whom/for what occasion the flowers are dedicated and mark an X next to your entry if you want to donate the flowers rather than taking them home yourself.

**From the Mission Ministry**
**Special Christmas Offerings**: Don’t forget that this is the time of year for our two special Christmas offerings. One is our *Southminster Local Mission Offering* with the funds going to the Mission Ministry to be used to help the missions Southminster supports and the other, the *Christmas Joy Offering*, goes to the Presbyterian Church (USA) to help current and retired clergy in need and to support students of color in Presbyterian-related schools and colleges. You’ll find more information in the December *Dialog* and will receive the envelopes for these offerings in your December statement. These offerings will be dedicated on Christmas Eve.

**Collection of items for our sister church in Cuba**: A team of five people from our church will be visiting our sister church in Guanabacoa Cuba, from January 4-11, 2023. They will take with them items that have been requested by the pastor in Gunanbacoa. The list of those items is on our web site; copies on blue paper are in the Narthex next to the suitcase or on the shelf across from the office. All donations should be here by December 23.

**Jubilee Bucks and Share the Spirit** (from Bobbi Frey):
Thanks to all who have ordered gift cards this year! Your orders resulted in **$1,940.45 in “free” money for Southminster**! (Remember, Southminster receives as a rebate a small percentage of the value of every gift card purchased. We call that “free” money.) Your next opportunity to order will be Sunday, January 8.
 **Donations for PRC (People’s Resource Center)** (also from Bobbi Frey):
Our weekly donations are greatly appreciated by PRC! They have seen an increase of clients since the pandemic began. It is still on the rise! They are presently serving over 500 clients each week. Our donations of food, personal care items, and cleaning products are very greatly appreciated! Donations can be left in the front entry at church or on the Freys’ front porch – no contribution is too small.
 **Care Notes:**“In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.” -Philippians 4:6
Even though we aren’t all together for worship, we are still collecting prayer requests! Please email or leave a message on our answering machine at 630-469-9149 if you won’t be present to fill out a prayer request slip.
 **Joys and Concerns**
**The flowers today** are from Sue Knisely in memory of her father, Howie Duell.  **We celebrate joys**:
  - Edem, one of our past COD students who lives in Ghana, was having financial hardship. Praise God, a money transfer went through for her this week.
 - WNBA star Brittney Griner, returning home to the U.S. after being released from the Russian prison system
**We pray to the Lord of the Harvest for a harvest and workers for the harvest.
We pray for the Jeremiah 29 discernment task force as they seek God’s will for Southminster in the 21st century.
We pray for the whole world and our nation:**
  - All those people and places affected by natural disasters – earthquakes, hurricanes, flooding, drought.
  - The people of Ukraine, the Holy Land, Pakistan, and Iran as they face war, civil unrest, and the fight for civil rights
 - Democracies, and especially Germany, as they struggle with citizens intent on attacking their governments. An example in our own country may be the attack on thepower grid in North Caroline.
 - The people of Cuba and our Cuba church as they face severe shortages.
 - We pray for an end to gun violence in our nation: we lift up all communities where lives have been lost to gun violence.
  - We pray for Hope Presbyterian in Wheaton in their search process for an interim pastor.
**We pray for those who mourn. Please lift up grieving families and friends.** - Jan Kaskovich and her family on the death of her mother, Norma, who was 98 years old
**We pray for those who are near death and their families and caregivers:**
  - Nan-c Hilpert, Wendy’s cousin
**We lift up those who are affected by cancer, as well as their support systems:** - Sandy Lopata requests prayers for Margaret Rolando
  - Tracey J., having treatment to cancerous lung tumor, and also for her husband, Paul, and mother, Ida
  - Linda Wolf Jeziorski, Dan Bohi, Peggy, Najla Brannin, Tracy Nelson, Rod Boehmer, Tammy Grey, Jan Mazur, Meagan Nielson, Kurt Parent, Charlene Simpson, Jim Sundquist, Connie Vernon, Beverly Webb, and others we name in our hearts.
**We pray for all who are infected with and/or affected by Covid.**
 - Barb’s grandson, Clark (8 months old)
**We pray for all who are recovering or dealing with mental or physical health or other challenges:** - Caroline Cruz and other teens who try to harm themselves
 - Robert, the father of Louanne Jourdan’s children, recovering from heart surgery. Pray for his well-being.
  - Gail Johnston, now in hospice care
  - Deb Bohi’s brother, Tom, hospitalized with a serious infection
  - Sandy Phee, Barb’s Aunt Ruth, Bob Welsh, Cathy Hoffman, Linda H., Vicki, the Kevorkian family, Linda M., Bill L.
 - victims of identity theft
  - Those who have chronic or progressive illnesses  - People receiving new treatments
  - People waiting for surgery
  - People giving up addictions
  - People struggling with difficult family concerns/marital circumstances
  - Prayers for personal peace
  - The many people who struggle with depression
**We pray for those who are far from home.**
**We continue to pray for our friends and family who work in the health fields**: nurses, doctors, and all other health care workers.
**Food Pantries**: Glen Ellyn Food Pantry, People’s Resource Center, and our members who serve them
**Local government bodies/boards**: Prayers for the DuPage County Board, the Village of Glen Ellyn Board, the Village of Glen Ellyn Task Force on Affordable Housing, the boards of the local school districts: 41, 44, 87, 89, 200, COD, and our library boards

 **Caring for you!**Our **Congregational Care Committee** is ready to assist in time of need. If you need assistance from the Congregational Care Ministry or Helping Hands) in December, call Angela Smith (630-235-1376). You may call Pastor Wendy Boden on her cell or home phone (if she has shared the numbers with you) or leave a message for her at the church office: 630-469-9149. Email Wendy at wendy@southminsterpc.org. (Please note that she can only read email when she is in the office.) You may also call your deacon if you need help from the church.

**Office Schedule:** Barb’s regular schedule is to be in the office Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays full days (approx. 8:45 a.m.-3:00 p.m.) while her son attends his day program full time on those days. Mondays and Wednesdays she works from home.

Grace and peace to you! Remember that we love God and neighbor. Our address is 680 South Park Blvd., Glen Ellyn, IL 60137 if you would like to set up an online account with your bank or mail in your pledge. Online giving through Vanco is also now an option – see the June Dialog for details or contact Ron Birchall. ***(Note that when signing up at Vanco, the correct church phone number to enter is 630-469-9149.)***

**Dates to remember this week:**
**Sunday, December 11 – Third Sunday of Advent**
 **Worship** at 9:30 a.m. in person and also live on Facebook
 **In-person Fellowship** in the Narthex following worship.
 **Staff meeting** in the Sanctuary 11:00-11:15 a.m.
 **Adult Ed. Bible Study** at 11:15 a.m. via Google Meet or by joining Blair at his
 computer in the Library
 **Youth**: **Pizza & Games** from 4:00-6:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall
**Monday, December 12 – Pastor’s Sabbath
Tuesday-Friday – Pastor Wendy’s Heart to Heart** on Facebook live at 4:20 p.m.
**Tuesday, December 13
Deacons are not meeting.
 Knitting Circle** at 10:00 a.m. in the Library
 **Session** at 7:30 p.m. in the Library
 A.A. at 7:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall
**Wednesday, December 14**
 **eNotes go out
 Property Ministry** at 7:00 p.m. in the Library  **Thursday, December 15
 Choir rehearsal** at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary **Friday, December 16** A.A. at 6:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall  **Next** **Sunday, December 18 – Fourth Sunday of Advent**
 **Worship/Christmas Program** at 9:30 a.m. in person and also live on Facebook
 **In-person Fellowship** in the Narthex following worship.
 **Staff meeting** in the Sanctuary 11:00-11:15 a.m.
 **Adult Ed. Bible Study** at 11:15 a.m. via Google Meet or by joining Blair at his
 computer in the Library
 **Women’s Christmas Salad Luncheon** at 11:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall

**Bearing Fruit – December 11, 2022
Come Share the Light**

What is important at Christmas? There are many things, but the most important is welcoming Christ into our hearts and homes – the rest is just window dressing.

Worship is an important way to prepare to meet Christ all over again in a new way. Each year we are different, so that though there is the familiar or traditional, the experience of Christmas is different each year for us.

In 2020 our Christmas was unlike any Christmas that any of us can remember. Some of our most cherished Christmas traditions did not happen in the way we preferred. Some of us had to struggle with finances and many of us avoided gathering together. But in 2020 Southminster gathered briefly outside on Christmas Eve. We lit the Advent Wreath and Christ Candle, then shared the light with one another by passing the light to the people around us. We heard the first chapter of the Gospel of John. We sang *Silent Night!* We boldly raised our candles against the darkness and cold singing *Joy to the World* by candlelight together on Christmas Eve. We were surprised to have a crowd of about 60 people. It is a cherished memory.

This year we have four special opportunities for us to worship together.

 - On **Sunday, December 18**, we will have our **annual Christmas program** during the worship service.
 - If you are looking for a quiet prayerful time of reflection or know a friend who might benefit, please join us on **Wednesday, December 21, at 7:30 p.m**. for our **Longest Night service**. Refreshments will be served after the service.
 - Our **Christmas Eve service** **(Saturday, December 24) will be at a new, earlier time: 4:30 p.m.
 -** Christmas Day, **December 25, is on Sunday this year. Please join us at our usual Sunday worship time: 9:30 a.m.** We will be serving cocoa and cider while we sing many of our favorite carols. Attire is casual- Christmassweaters and PJs!

One of the ways we bear the fruit of God’s love is by gathering together to worship God. Each Sunday we light the candles for worship as a symbol of God’s presence with us and with those at home. We encourage those at home to light a candle with us. Yes, the services will be streamed (except for Longest Night) and recorded to be available on our website and YouTube channel, but come to 680 South Park Blvd. in person and share the light of Christ this Christmas season with us.