**Southminster Presbyterian Church**

**2nd Sunday of Advent**

**December 10, 2023**

**9:30 a.m.**

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

1) on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SouthminsterGlenEllyn/>
2) our YouTube channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPgWICngOvkmR1OXgCG_wiA/live>

3) our web site: <https://www.southminsterpc.org/>

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

Our Photo Story today is “Angels.”

 Welcome and Announcements

  Lighting the Advent Wreath Lighters: the Storey family

 We light this candle for peace.

 We light the candles of hope and peace as a sign
 of the coming light of Christ.

 **All:** **Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!**

  Response 314: *Longing for Light, We Wait in Darkness* (verses 1, 2)

 *(Christ, Be Our Light)*

**Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
Light for the world to see.
Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.**

**Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has power to save us.
Make us your living voice.
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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 Call to Worship  (Psalm 27:14; James 5:8)

 Leader: Wait for the Lord; be strong,

 **People: And let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!**

 **All:** **The Lord is near!**

 Hymn: *Here I Am to Worship*  Pg. 19, gold worship supplement

 Prayer of Confession: (unison)

**Faithful God, you are at work to restore all of creation in its intended harmony. Give us your shalom that we may be reconciled to all enemies in the peace that passes all understanding through Christ Jesus our Lord. God of promise, God of hope, into our darkness come. Amen.**

 (Time of silence for personal prayer and confession)

 The Good News of Jesus Christ (Isaiah 35: 1, 10)

 Leader: The wilderness will rejoice; the dry land will blossom.
 The people of God will return with joy and singing.

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

 Response 83: *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*  (verses 1, 2)

**Come, though long-expected Jesus,**

**Born to set thy people free,**

**From our fears and sins release us;**

**Let us find our rest in thee.**

**Israel’s strength and consolation,**

**Hope of all the earth thou art;**

**Dear desire of every nation,**

**Joy of every longing heart.**

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 The Passing of the Peace

 Word with Children (Blair Baldwin)

 Children worshiping in the sanctuary, please come forward.

 *God Welcomes All*  Hymnal 399

**God welcomes all, strangers and friends;**

**God’s love is strong and it never ends.**

Text: John L. Bell, 2008

Music: South African song, transc, John L. Bell, 2008

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 Prayer for Illumination

 Scripture Lessons:  Isaiah 40:1-5 Pew Bible, p. 667, O.T.)

 Isaiah 40:6-11 Pew Bible, p. 667 (O.T.)

 Sermon: “Peace”

 Saying What We Believe/Affirmation of Faith (unison) 2 Corinthians 1:3-4

**Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, who consoles us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to console those who are in any affliction with the consolation with which we ourselves are consoled by God.**

 Hymn 87: *Comfort, Comfort Now My People* (all 3 verses)

 Prayers of the People and the Lord’s Prayer

 Leader: Lord, in your mercy,

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

**The Lord’s Prayer:** (unison)

**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: *Comfort Ye My People*  Handel

 \*Response 93: *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Might Gates* (verse 1)

**Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates;**

**Behold the King of glory waits;**

**The king of kings is drawing near;**

**The Savior of the world is here.**

Public domain

 Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication

 Hymn 106: *Prepare the Way, O Zion* (all 3 verses)

 Charge and Benediction

 Leader: Now go and serve the Lord,

 **All: For we are blessed to be a blessing!
 Amen! Amen!**

 Postlude: *Every Valley Shall Be Exalted*  Handel

**Participants and Technical Crew**

Rev. Wendy Boden
Liturgist: Ann Anderson
Greeter/Fellowship: Sue Knisely
Music: Tom Anderson; Derek Buckley
Worship Assistant: David Kozich

Tech support: Chris Kozich, Blair Nelson

The flowers today are given by the Bohi/Parks family celebrating Elspeth’s birthday.

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

If you are online, we’re glad to have you! Using the comments section on Facebook, you can say hello, ask for words of peace, or request prayers.
 **Sunday Morning Adult Ed. Bible Study** will not meet today since Blair needs to be at the rehearsal for the Christmas program.

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) on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPgWICngOvkmR1OXgCG_wiA/live>

or on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/SouthminsterGlenEllyn/>

If you are watching from home on Facebook, please check in and say hello so we can see that you have joined us. This is one way to make worship less “remote” and strengthen community at Southminster.

*The live video will appear about 15 minutes before the scheduled start time.*

*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/> 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. Coming up we’ll be looking for these:
 **December 17: “Christmas Trees”** –Please send us photos of decorated Christmas
 trees (or maybe of your cat resting inside the tree?!) by Thursday, December 14.
 **December 24: “Nativity Scenes”** –Please send us your photos by Thursday,
 December 21.
 **December 31: “Timekeepers”** – Clocks, watches, calendars, hourglasses, sundials…
 ways we keep time! Please send us your photos by Thursday, December 28.

**Send photos to our dedicated email address, used just for photos:****PhotoStory@Southminsterpc.org****.** (If you only have hard copies of your photos, please leave them in the photo box on Pastor Wendy’s desk, labeled with your name and the date they are to be used.)

 **Elders: Remember that Session meets a week early this month: this Tuesday, December 12, at 7:30 p.m. in the Parlor/Library.**
**Notes from Blair Nelson:**
**Adult Education**: Our after-worship Bible study does not meet today. (Blair N. needs to be in the Christmas Program rehearsal.). On December 17 we begin studying our last minor prophet, Malachi. So, this will be a good time to join us, if you haven’t before. That will be our last class in 2023! We will resume in January.

**Men of Southminster**: Be sure to have Wednesday, January 17, at 7:30 p.m. on your calendar for a dessert fellowship. We will up our sugar content and get to know each other better. A couple of the guys will share about their lives and God’s role in it. Want to be one of them? Contact Blair N.

**Youth**:  If you’re planning to read Scripture for the Christmas program, the rehearsal is today after worship, and the program is next Sunday during the worship service.
 **From the Worship Ministry:
Add these December worship services to your calendars:** ***- Our Christmas program*** is during the worship service on Sunday, December 17. ***- Longest Night Service*** at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 21, is a special service acknowledging challenges during the holidays, when Christmas may not seem “merry.” (This service will not be streamed.)
***- Christmas Eve*** is on a Sunday this year, which means there will be two services on December 24!
 + The 9:30 a.m. service will celebrate the ***4th Sunday of Advent***.
 + ***The Christmas Eve service will again be at 4:30 p.m.!*** It will be a traditional service including Scripture, carols, choir, and candle lighting.(The earlier time accommodates choir members and others who wish to gather with their families later that evening.)
**Women’s Circle Christmas Luncheon**This Friday, December 15, is the women’s annual **Christmas Salad Luncheon** in the narthex at 11:30 a.m. ALL women are invited! Guests are welcome. Bring a salad to share; drinks will be provided. Derek Buckley will delight us with Christmas music, and we will enjoy the fellowship of our church sisters. A free will offering will be taken to cover the cost of the entertainment. If you have any questions, please contact Gretchen Fleming (phone or text to 630-517-0926) or Sue Knisely (phone or text to 630-776-7998).

**Jubilee Bucks: Order today, December 10**
The last time to order gift cards before the holidays will be today, December 10. Email your order to Bobbi Frey (bobbifrey@aol.com) by 9:00 tonight. The list of available cards is available at church, on the Southminster website, and attached to the weekly Friday emails with the worship bulletins.

In January, we will return to ordering the first Sunday of the month, which is January 7. **Donations for PRC (People’s Resource Center)**:
Southminster has been faithfully providing donations of food items and personal care products for PRC for many years. If you would like suggestions for what to give, PRC has provided a list of the items that are most needed. Copies are printed on bright green paper and are in the stand on the nametag shelf (main hallway – across from the offices). You can view the list online at the PRC website: <https://www.peoplesrc.org/give-food-or-goods/>.
Many thanks to all who continue to support PRC’s mission to meet our communities’ needs, neighbor to neighbor.

**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.

**Friends,
You are all invited to offer prayer for people whether they are members or not. It would be a joy and very helpful to know how people are doing. If you have submitted a person to be prayed for, can you send an update to the office, please, once in a while? Thank you! Pastor Wendy**

**Joys and Concerns**   **The flowers today** are from the Bohi/Parks family in celebration of Elspeth’s birthday.
**We give thanks to God for joys:**
 - This fall World Relief welcomed 100 new arrivals, 25 apartment setups. Families arrived from: Afghanistan, Venezuela, Peru, Somalia, Congo, Iran, Syria, Iraq, Myanmar, and Pakistan.
 - The birth of Blaire Elizabeth Benson, daughter of Andee and Brad Benson and granddaughter of Pete and Pam Petersen
 - Tricia Smith is grateful for the care and concern of Southminster during the past several years.
  - Linda Wolf Jeziorski, as she continues to heal
**We pray for the whole world and our nation:**
 - We pray for former President Jimmy Carter and family on the death of his wife, Rosalynn, whose memorial service and funeral were held last week. Rosalynn Carter was the First Lady from 1977 to 1981; she was a strong advocate for humanitarian causes and mental health care.
  - We pray for an end to gun violence in our nation. In the first days of this month (December 1-3) there were 8 mass shootings (involving 4 or more victims), leaving 7 people dead and 23 injured. Click on [data from the Gun Violence Archive](https://www.gunviolencearchive.org/reports/mass-shooting) to see the current national statistics for mass shootings.
  - We pray for safety in our schools and any place where people gather.
  - We pray for our nation as we continue to wrestle with race relations.
 - All throughout the world who are recovering from earthquakes, floods, and other natural disasters
  - We continue to pray for peace in the world, especially Ukraine/Russia, Israel/Gaza, and the Sudan
**Blessed are those who mourn:** - The Schmidt family on the death of Parin’s Aunt Ruth last weekend
 - The family of Alan Meyer, who died after a long illness
 - The family of Mary Lou Issert, who passed away last week after a 25-year battle with breast cancer
 - Donna Marton requests prayers for the family of a dear friend who passed away suddenly on Thanksgiving
 - Tom Corcoran, a friend of Bohis, passed away on November 27 from Covid complications.
 - Prayers for Drew Price, a Chicago firefighter who died from injuries suffered while fighting a fire
 - We continue to pray for the Baldwin family in the death of Blair’s uncle.
 - The family of Nancy Eberhardt, a former Southminster member, who died November 7. Her Service of Witness to the Resurrection will be held at Southminster on Saturday, December 16.
  - We continue to pray for the family of Grace Van Beveren
  - We pray for Joan and for the Koska sons and their families, mourning the loss of Ed.
  - The family and many friends of Dan Bohi, and especially Deb, Jessica, and Megan and their families
**We lift up those who are affected by cancer, as well as their support systems:
*Please help us pray for your family and friends by updating your loved ones’ information with the church office. We support them and you in their journey.***
 - Heidi Shierry asks prayers for Frank Braun, undergoing chemo for a rare form of sarcoma
 - Frank Lucchesi, friend of the Birchalls, facing cancer surgery
 - We continue to pray for: Dean, Bobby B., Rod B., Annette C., Tom G., Dean L., Jan M., Nikki M., Rebecca M., Tim O., Helen S., Marta S., Gerry S., Beverly W., and others we name in our hearts. **We pray for all who are recovering or dealing with mental or physical health or other challenges:**
 - Floyd Rogers will be hospitalized for several days fighting an infection
 - Ann Anderson asks prayers for Dan, who is facing a heart transplant
 - Heidi Shierry’s cousin, Bailey, recovering from 3rd degree burns; it is a long journey!
 - Derek Buckley asks prayers for healing and speedy recovery for Ruth Ewing, who is hospitalized with MERSA.
 - Prayers for all who have Covid
 - Curt, brother of Elise Henkels, recovering from diabetic concerns, now receiving inpatient physical therapy
  - Pain relief for Paul Anderson
  - Jim Smith, recovering at Brookdale
  - We pray for those who are in hospice care: Gail Johnston at Du Page Convalescent Center (If you send a card to Gail, please mail it to Andrea Schmidt, whose address is in the directory.); former President Jimmy Carter.
 - We continue to pray for Viola’s family, Miles, Mary, Maykel, Edem, and others we name in our hearts.
**We pray for the Jeremiah 29 discernment task force and all of us as we seek God’s will for Southminster in the 21st century.** May we all be attentive to the Holy Spirit’s leading.

**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: The church office is closed on Mondays and Wednesdays.**Barb’s regular schedule is to be in the office Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from approximately 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. while her son attends his day program on those days. Mondays and Wednesdays she works from home.

**Note holiday schedule changes!**
Both Christmas Day and New Year’s Day are on Mondays, so Pastor Wendy Boden will
 take the Tuesdays of those weeks (December 26 and January 2) as her Sabbath days.
Barb plans to be out of the office December 26-29... (unless there’s another travel mess like
 what happened last year at Christmastime!) She will return to the office January 2.
The worship bulletin for December 31 will need to be completed and sent out before
 Christmas weekend. If you have any important announcements that need to be included
 in that bulletin, they need to be turned in no later than December 20.
There will be no eNotes on Wednesday, December 27.
BUT, December 27 will still be the deadline for the January *Dialog*!
Let’s plan to have the January *Dialog* go out a day later than usual, on Thursday, January 4.

Grace and peace to you! Remember that we love God, neighbor, and one another. 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 –for details contact Ron Birchall.

**Dates to remember this week:**    **Sunday, December 10 – *2nd Sunday of Advent***
**Order Jubilee Bucks gift cards** by emailing bobbifrey@aol.com before 9:00 p.m.
 This is your **last chance to order before Christmas**!
 **Worship** at 9:30 a.m. in person and also live on Facebook
 **In-person Fellowship** in the Narthex following the service
 **Rehearsal for the Christmas Program** at 10:45 following worship and
 fellowship; **all staff present at rehearsal; no Adult Ed.**
 **Easter Celebration Budget meeting** at 11:00 a.m. in McHenry Parlor/Library
 **Nominating meeting** at 11:15 a.m. in the choir room
**Monday, December 11 – Pastor’s Sabbath
Tuesday-Friday – Pastor Wendy’s Heart to Heart** on Facebook live at 4:20 p.m.
**Tuesday, December 12
No Deacon meeting**
 **Sisters Knitting Circle** at 10:00 a.m. in McHenry Parlor/Library
 **Session** at 7:30 p.m. in McHenry Parlor/Library
 A.A. meets at 7:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall
**Wednesday, December 13
 eNotes** go out
 **Pastor’s Prelude Bible Study** at 4:00 p.m. at Donna Marton’s home
**Thursday, December 14
 Choir rehearsal** at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary
**Friday, December 15**
 **Women’s Christmas Salad Luncheon** at 11:30 a.m. in the Narthex/Parlor,
 followed by music in the Sanctuary
 A.A. meets at 6:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall
**Saturday, December 16
 Visitation followed by Service of Witness to the Resurrection for
 Nancy Eberhardt**; visitation begins at 10:00 a.m., service at 11:00 a.m. **Next** **Sunday,** **December 17 – *3rd 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 the service
 **Adult Ed. Bible Study** at 11:15 a.m. either by joining Blair in person
 in the McHenry Parlor/Library or online via Google Meet

**Bearing Fruit – December 10, 2023**

**Getting Ready for Christmas with an Advent Wreath**

The Advent wreath is a long-standing part of the Southminster Presbyterian Church worship tradition. The Advent Wreath comes to us via the German Lutheran and Roman Catholic traditions of Christianity. The wreath is in an evergreen circle, symbolizing eternity and the everlasting life which is promised in Jesus Christ. There are four candles, generally in blue, symbolizing the coming of a new King, Jesus Christ.

Some traditions use red or purple candles or white. The white candle at the center represents Christ; the Christ Candle is lit on Christmas Eve and lasts through the Christmas Season, ending with Epiphany, January 6.

There are no fixed “names” for each of the candles leading up to Christmas Tide. For example, some names for the other candles are arranged as follows “Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love” or “Watch, Prepare, Rejoice and Behold” or “Prophet, Bethlehem, Shepherd, and Angel”.

Some Congregations have the candles represent different characters of Advent and Christmas as a way for the story to unfold- Faces at the manger with Shepherd, Wiseman, Joseph, and Mary. Other congregations use themes of “Annunciation, Proclamation, Rejoice, and Fulfillment.”

Southminster’s Worship Arts Team has decorated our narthex for Advent using our banners from the past. It is rumored that these were created years ago by a treasured member, Fluryanne Leach. The banners just outside the sanctuary are “Watch, Prepare, Rejoice, and Behold.” In the narthex proper we have the banners “Emmanuel, Son of God, Prince of Peace, and Savior.”

Whatever sequence or names are used, the Scripture readings, prayers, lighting of the candles, the participation of worshipers in the service… all are geared to unfolding the story of redemption through God’s grace in the incarnation. Together as a people of God we wait for God’s action in the world as we pray, listen, and watch.

This year we are lighting candles we name “Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love,” remembering the promises of God with prayer. What names might you choose for the four candles as you prepare for Christmas? No matter what we name the candles, Advent is a season of waiting and watching, bathed in the light of the world, Jesus Christ!

Watch and wait for Christ’s coming again!