

THE SERVICE FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Lisle

You Are a Blessing When You Pass Through the Waters by Lisle Gwynn Garrity

CONCORD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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WILMINGTON, DELAWARE 19803

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ORDER OF WORSHIP

December 1, 2024

10:00 a.m.

* All who are able may stand

Congregation reads aloud the **BOLD** print

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bettye Shirar (she/her), liturgist

MINUTE FOR MISSION

Guatemala Chicken Project

Mission Committee

*LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH: *THE CANDLE OF HOPE*

Roseo Family

One: On this day we bear witness to the light of Christ with all the faithful of every time and place:

One: With Isaiah and Jeremiah, prophets of Israel, we await the promised salvation of the Lord and look for the coming of the one who will bring justice and righteousness to the earth.

ALL: THE WORD BECAME FLESH AND LIVED AMONG US, AND WE HAVE SEEN HIS GLORY. ALLELUIA!

HYMN NO. 87 (all sing) *Comfort, Comfort Now My People*

ALL: FAITHFUL GOD, OUT OF WAR'S CHAOS, YOU BRING THE ORDER OF PEACE. RENEW US IN HOPE, THAT WE MAY WORK TOWARD CHRIST'S ADVENT OF PEACE AMONG ALL NATIONS. GOD OF PROMISE, GOD OF HOPE, INTO OUR DARKNESS COME.

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

One: Arise, shine: for your light has come.

ALL: O GOD, WE LIVE AS IF THE LIGHT HAD NEVER DEFEATED THE DARKNESS IN THE WORLD OR IN US.

One: And the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

ALL: WE CONFESS THAT WE IGNORE THE CHRIST YOU SENT TO BE AMONG US, TO BE IN US.

One: For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you.

ALL: WE'VE KEPT THE BIRTH OF YOUR SON CONFINED TO THE CHRISTMAS SEASON AND DO NOT YEARN FOR HIS BIRTH EACH MOMENT IN OUR WAITING HEARTS.

(cont'd)

One: And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.

ALL: LORD, YOU CAME TO US IN THE FULLNESS OF TIME. FORGIVE US FOR NOT OPENING OUR EYES TO YOUR COMING. IT'S TIME THAT WE PREPARE FOR YOUR COMING. LET THE EARTH RING WITH SONG. LET THE LIGHT BREAK FORTH. LET US ALL REJOICE IN THE MIRACLE OF LOVE. LET CHRIST COME INTO THE FULLNESS OF OUR TIME.

[Time of silent prayer]

***ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

One: Please know that Jesus Christ has the power over life and death. It is through his love that we are offered eternal life. And it is through his grace that our sins are forgiven.

ALL: WE BELIEVE IN THE TRIUNE GOD, THE CREATOR, THE REDEEMER, AND THE SUSTAINER AND THROUGH THIS REMARKABLE GOD OUR SINS ARE FORGIVEN.

***RESPONSE (all sing)**

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice!

NO. 132, v. 2

**GOOD CHRISTIAN FRIENDS, REJOICE WITH HEART AND SOUL AND VOICE;
NOW YE HEAR OF ENDLESS BLISS: JESUS CHRIST WAS BORN FOR THIS!
HE HAS OPENED HEAVEN'S DOOR, AND WE ARE BLEST FOREVERMORE.
CHRIST WAS BORN FOR THIS! CHRIST WAS BORN FOR THIS!**

***SHARING THE PEACE**

One: The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

ALL: AND ALSO WITH YOU.

[Turn to those around you and share with them words and signs of peace.]

WONDERING TIME

Rev. Chelsea Spyles (she/her)

[Children remain in worship with their families. Quiet activities available in the back of the sanctuary.]

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

ALL: GOD OUR HELPER, BY YOUR HOLY SPIRIT, OPEN OUR MINDS, THAT AS THE SCRIPTURES ARE READ AND YOUR WORD IS PROCLAIMED, WE MAY BE LED INTO YOUR TRUTH AND TAUGHT YOUR WILL, FOR THE SAKE OF JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN.

SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 40:1-11, 21-31 (NRSV)

One: This is the word of our Lord.

ALL: THANKS BE TO GOD.

SERMON

“Hope as Protest”

Rev. Chelsea Spyres (she/her)

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

[This morning we receive the offering for the Deacons' Fund. Your contributions provide immediate assistance to individuals in our community in financial crisis – real people, real needs, real help. Any loose offering and designated checks go toward this fund. Let us give with grateful hearts.]

OFFERTORY

Every Valley

John Ness Beck

Chancel Choir

Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain made low;

And the crooked made straight, and the rough places plain.

And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,

And all flesh shall see it together;

For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. Amen.

*RESPONSE (all sing)

As With Gladness Those of Old

NO. 150, v. 3

AS THEY OFFERED GIFTS MOST RARE AT THY MANGER, RUDE AND BARE,

SO MAY WE WITH HOLY JOY, PURE AND FREE FROM SIN'S ALLOY,

ALL OUR COSTLIEST TREASURES BRING, CHRIST, TO THEE, OUR HEAVENLY KING.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION

GREAT THANKSGIVING

One: The Lord be with you.

ALL: AND ALSO WITH YOU.

One: Lift up your hearts.

ALL: WE LIFT THEM TO THE LORD.

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

ALL: IT IS RIGHT TO GIVE OUR THANKS AND PRAISE.

(cont'd)

One: It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise, O Lord our God, creator and ruler of the universe...

...who forever sing to the glory of your name:

**ALL: HOLY, HOLY, HOLY LORD, GOD OF POWER AND MIGHT,
HEAVEN AND EARTH ARE FULL OF YOUR GLORY.**

HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST.

BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD.

HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST.

One: You are holy, O God of majesty, and blessed is Jesus Christ...

... Great is the mystery of faith:

ALL: CHRIST HAS DIED, CHRIST IS RISEN, CHRIST WILL COME AGAIN.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

SHARING THE MEAL

All are welcome to receive communion. Please come forward using the center aisle.

When you reach the Table, take a piece of bread from the basket and dip it in the cup.

Eat immediately, then return to your pew via the side aisles.

(We serve grape juice instead of wine and offer gluten-free bread so that all may partake.)

COMMUNION MUSIC

In the Bleak Midwinter

NO. 144

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

*HYMN NO. 82

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Welcome visitors! We're glad you're here today. If you'd like to learn more about what's happening at Concord, how you can get involved, or how we can help or support you, fill out one of the Connection Cards in the pew with your contact information. You can place the card in the offering or give it to a greeter as you leave. The peace of Christ be with you.

Today we are thankful to welcome the Rev. Chelsea Spyrès to our pulpit. She is a United Methodist Pastor serving as Pastor & Executive Director of Riverfront Ministries, one of our PCUSA New Worshipping Communities. Chelsea grew up in Newark, DE, graduating with a degree in social work from the University of Delaware, before moving to Detroit, MI, to serve as a caseworker at a non-profit working with individuals experiencing homelessness.

Chelsea graduated from Wesley Seminary in Washington, DC, with her Master's in Divinity. Chelsea enjoys creating spaces of worship and creativity in and outside the local church, bringing people together for community support and transformation. Chelsea began with Riverfront Ministries in January 2020, and since then, has launched the Wilmington Kitchen Collective, a shared kitchen space for culinary entrepreneurs to experience community and support while launching their small businesses. Chelsea loves hiking and live music, playing board games and D&D with her spouse Ryan, and spending time with her friends' young kids.

About today's bulletin cover: *You Are a Blessing When You Pass Through the Waters* by Lisle Gwynn Garrity (inspired by Isaiah 43:1-7): *"When we began working on our Advent theme, we were inspired by the storied tradition of quilting. Though I am not a textile artist I turned to the fabric medium I enjoy: painting with ink dyes and gold resist on silk. As I read through my assigned scriptures for this series, I created a list of the images and patterns I found in my texts: water, fire, spirit, fruit trees, mountains, stars, sky. Then, I stretched my silk and began to paint, creating a series of 6 small banners.*

Next, I moved into a digital space. I photographed my silk banners and then began drawing quilt patterns with my stylus pen onto my iPad, collaging the photos of my silk paintings into the designs. As I digitally stitched together patterns and geometric shapes, I realized I was quilting, just in my own unique way.

This piece is meant to be a visual prayer, inviting you to internalize and personalize the words of blessing from Isaiah 43. And so, I invite you to take a deep breath in, then let it out, and pray with me: 'When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you.' (Is. 43:2a)"

The flowers today are given by Marj Johnson in honor of her daughter successfully defending her doctoral dissertation on November 13. Congratulations, Dr. Cara Stanard!

Assisting in the service of worship are:

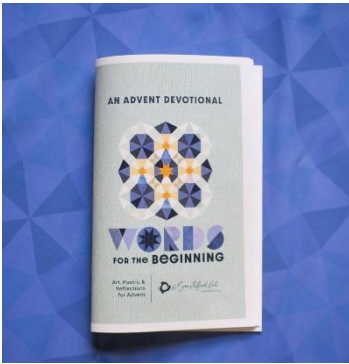
Deacon-in-Charge: A.T. & Ryan Moffett

Liturgist: Bettye Shirar

Livestream Team: Bob Brown, A.T. Moffett, Nancy Tucker, Bonnie Twilley



The first Sunday of each month is Communion Sunday, so *Navigating the Bible* will not be held. After Wondering Time, children will remain in worship with their families and take part in communion after the sermon. There are quiet activities at the back of the sanctuary that children may take to the pews.



Advent Devotional Booklet Available

This devotional contains art, poems, hymns, commentary, and reflection prompts. It is meant to be read at your own pace throughout the season of Advent and Christmas; it concludes with Epiphany. The booklet is great for older youth and adults of all ages—and especially for those who are hungry for weekly readings and prompts. **Pick up your copy in the back of the sanctuary today** or read from your computer or phone using the link provided in this week's issue of Concord Connects.



AdventFest

Sunday, December 8 – 11:30am

(following 10:30am worship)

ENJOY...

- ❖ **Luncheon - \$10/person:** Fran Ciabattoni's delicious pasta & meatballs served with Caesar salad, roll, & dessert.
- ❖ **Make and Take crafts** for all ages, including ornaments, gingerbread man, decorate a walking stick, & edible garland for birds & squirrels to enjoy.
- ❖ **Christmas Marketplace** – porch boards w/ greetings (Concord Youth Group), handmade jewelry & carved wood pieces (Water is Life)
- ❖ **Christmas music**

Sign up in back of the sanctuary or contact the Church Office.

Contributions for the Flower Fund for Christmas: If you would like to contribute to the Flower Fund for the upcoming holiday season, please make your check for \$20/poinsettia payable to Concord Church, memo: "Christmas Flowers." Place it in a designated envelope in the offering or the Church Office mailbox. Be sure to include a note stating how you wish the acknowledgment to read in the bulletin. Contributing to the grace and beauty of the Christmas decorations is a lovely way to remember or honor a loved one. Questions? [Contact the Church Office.](#)





Share the Spirit!

Cock-a-doodle-do! Have we got a gift for you...

This Christmas, we are supporting the **Chicken Project** of the Guatemala Partnership of New Castle Presbytery. You can help give a woman in Guatemala a starter set of chickens which helps address food insecurity and provides women who live at a subsistence level with another source of income. Please make your contribution through Concord (memo Guatemala Chickens) or at <https://mailchi.mp/637434c252f3/gift-of-chicks-advent-2024>.

Advent Is the Season of Giving!

We invite you to take part in a *Reverse Advent Calendar* to benefit our community! Instead of receiving a daily gift as we count down the days to Christmas, we will *give back daily* by placing a non-perishable food item in a bag each day. Bring your items to church each Sunday in December and place them by the empty manger in the narthex. We will be sharing these gifts with the community by placing them in Concord's Blessing Box.



Suggestions: dry pasta, spaghetti sauce, canned tuna & chicken, cereal, PB&J, canned fruit & vegetables, canned soup, oatmeal packets, boxed mac & cheese, granola/protein bars. Smaller containers are best, as the box provides for short-term needs and space inside is limited. (No glass or expired items, please.)



Concord Concert Series'

Annual Christmas Gala Concert

Sunday, December 15, 7:00pm

*featuring Handel's Messiah
and other Christmas favorites*

Profession chamber orchestra, professional soloists and

The Concord Concert Choir

Concord Presbyterian Church (Sanctuary)

Free admission -- offering taken to benefit Concert Series