

WAIT FOR THE LORD

the season of **ADVENT** 2024

December 15, 2024

Third Sunday of Advent

10:30am

Chimes

Welcome

Lighting of the Advent Candles

Prelude

Call to Worship — based on Zephaniah 3:14-20

Joy! It's time to sing, faithful daughter and sons of God!

It's time to shout out loud, people of God!

Be happy and celebrate with all your being,

faithful children of Jerusalem!

The Eternal One has cancelled all judgments against you.

God has changed the course of our enemies, inside and out.

The True King of the people, the Eternal One, is standing right here among you.

We have no reason to be afraid ever again.

On that day people will say to the faithful in Jerusalem,

“Do not be afraid, Zion.

Hold your head and hands high, and take courage.”

The Eternal your God is standing right here among you,

and God is the champion who will rescue us.

God will joyfully celebrate over you;

God will rest in great love for us;

God will joyfully sing because of his love.

Prepare the way, O Zion, your Christ is drawing near!
Let every hill and valley a level way appear.
Greet One who comes in glory, foretold in sacred story.
O blest is Christ who came in God's most holy name.

He brings God's rule, O Zion; he comes from heaven above.
His rule is peace and freedom, and justice, truth, and love.
Lift high your praise resounding, for grace and joy abounding.
O blest is Christ who came in God's most holy name.

Fling wide your gates, O Zion; your Savior's rule embrace,
and tidings of salvation proclaim in every place.
All lands will bow rejoicing, their adoration voicing.
O blest is Christ who came in God's most holy name.

Call to Confession

Prayers of Confession

God of such hope, you always call us home
from the exile of selfishness or shame
to the freedom of justice, the balm of healing, and the joy of sharing.

**Forgive our participation in matters not of your making.
Set us free from pasts we cannot amend.
Make us strong to join in the holy work of Jesus,
as friends of strangers and victims,
as companions of those whom others shun,
and as healing for those whose hearts are broken.**

**We make our prayers through Jesus Christ our Brother.
Hear our confessions ...**

Scripture – Isaiah 12:2-6

Assurance of Forgiveness

Response to Forgiveness #90

Wait for the Lord

Refrain: Wait for the Lord, whose day is near. Wait for the Lord; be strong; take heart!

Psalm 27

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom then shall I fear?
the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom then shall I be afraid?
When evildoers came upon me to eat up my flesh,
it was they, my foes and my adversaries, who stumbled and fell.
Though an army should encamp against me, yet my heart shall not be afraid;
and though war should rise up against me, yet will I put my trust in the Lord.
One thing have I asked of the Lord; one thing I seek;
that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life;
to behold the fair beauty of the Lord, to seek God in the temple. (Refrain)

For on the day of trouble the Lord shall shelter me in safety;
the Lord shall hide me in the secrecy of the holy place and set me high upon a rock.
Even now the Lord lifts up my head above my enemies round about me.
Therefore I will offer in the holy place an oblation with sounds of great gladness;
I will sing and make music to the Lord. (Refrain)

Hearken to my voice, O Lord, when I call; have mercy on me and answer me.
You speak in my heart and say, "Seek my face." Your face, Lord, will I seek.
Hide not your face from me, nor turn away your servant in displeasure.
You have been my helper; cast me not away; do not forsake me, O God of my salvation.
Though my father and my mother forsake me, the Lord will sustain me. (Refrain)

Show me your way, O Lord; lead me on a level path, because of my enemies.
Deliver me not into the hand of my adversaries, for false witnesses have risen up against me,
and also those who speak malice. What if I had not believed
that I should see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living!
O tarry and await the Lord's pleasure; be strong, and the Lord shall comfort your heart;
wait patiently for the Lord. (Refrain)

Affirmation of Faith – Presbyterian Study Catechism (1998)

Question 2. How do we live by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ?

I am not my own. I have been bought with a price. The Lord Jesus Christ loved me and gave himself for me. I entrust myself completely to his care, giving thanks each day for his wonderful goodness.

Question 3. How do we live for the love of God?

I love because God first loved me. Amazed by grace, I live for the Lord who died and rose again, triumphant over death, for my sake. Therefore, I take those around me to heart, especially those in need, knowing that Christ died for them no less than for me.

Question 4. How do we live in the communion of the Holy Spirit?

By the Holy Spirit, I am made one with the Lord Jesus Christ. I am baptized into Christ's body, the church. As a member of this community, I trust in God's Word, share in the Lord's Supper, and turn to God in prayer. As I grow in grace and knowledge, I am led to do the good works that God intends for my life.

*Passing the Peace

Announcements and Invitations

Gathering of our Offerings

Offertory Music

Response #654

In the Lord I'll Be Ever Thankful

In the Lord I'll be ever thankful; in the Lord I will rejoice! Look to God; do not be afraid.
Lift up your voices, the Lord is near. Lift up your voices; the Lord is near.

Prayers of Intercession, Lord's Prayer

Our Father, Who art in Heaven, Hallowed by Thy name, Thy Kingdome 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.

Hymn #348 (remain seated)

Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending

Lo, he comes with clouds descending, once for our salvation slain;
thousand, thousand saints attending join to sing the glad refrain:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! Christ the Lord returns to reign.

Now redemption, long expected, comes in solemn splendor near;

all the saints this world rejected thrill the trumpet sound to hear:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! See the day of God appear!

Yea, amen, let all adore thee, high on thine eternal throne;
Savior, take the power and glory; claim the kingdom as thine own.
Come, Lord Jesus; come, Lord Jesus; come, Lord Jesus.
Thou shalt reign, and thou alone!

Scripture – Luke 3:7-18

Sermon – “What, then, should we do?” – On coats, taxes, extortion... and repentance

*Hymn #828

More Love to Thee, O Christ

More love to thee, O Christ, more love to thee!
Hear thou the prayer I make on bended knee.
This is my earnest plea: more love, O Christ, to thee;
more love to thee, more love to thee!
Once earthly joy I craved, sought peace and rest.
Now thee alone I seek; give what is best.
This all my prayer shall be: more love, O Christ, to thee;
more love to thee, more love to thee!
Then shall my latest breath whisper thy praise;
this be the parting cry my heart shall raise.
This still its prayer shall be: more love, O Christ, to thee;
more love to thee, more love to thee!

*Charge and Benediction

*Sung Response

Northumbria Community

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you, wherever he may send you. May he guide you through the wilderness, protect you through the storm. May he bring you home rejoicing at the wonders he has shown you. May he bring you home rejoicing, once again into our doors.

Postlude



Information & Announcements

Welcome Friends and Guests!

Whether you are sharing in the worship of God with us for the first time, visiting with family or friends, or returning for a visit to your home church, we welcome you today in the name of Jesus. Please share some contact information in the red book located in the pew so we can follow up with you and make a place for you in our weekly fellowship.

Prayer Concerns

If you have a need or a request for prayer, please contact the church office.

Ongoing Prayer Requests: Our Flint River Presbytery and campus ministries

Current Member Concerns: Jane Prentice; Ann Hall; Jane Ebey; Evelyn Clark; Annette Hutto; Jeff, Lynn, Josh

and Hannah Denny - Current Friends and Family Concerns: Margaret Yawn; Donna Carole Kitchens; Susan Garrett (colleague of Gregg Reed, cancer diagnosis) - Military Personnel Prayer List: Austin Riley; Joshua Sulkers; Isaac Falkenstine (Bonnie Diboll's grandson); Nicholas Sanchez (Kathy McCord's godson); James Watwood; Dawson Everett (Gwen Kitchens' great-nephew); Carter Eddlemon (Doug & Carol Holt's grandson)

Adult/Youth Sunday School

Adult/Youth Sunday school will continue through December 15th in the Community room at 9^{AM}. Children's Sunday school continues through December 22nd, taking a one-week break December 29th, then picking back up January 5th at 9:30^{AM}. All children, grades 5 and under, are welcome to arrive at 9^{AM} so parents may participate in Sunday School. Childcare remains available through the end of worship.

Children's Sunday School – Month of Thanks

Our children's Sunday school class is practicing gratitude all month. As they reflected on being thankful that they have warm clothes and homes, they decided they'd like to share that warmth with other children by collecting kids' winter coats, jackets and sweaters to donate to the Rosa Taylor clothing closet. They will have a box set up this Sunday for donations that can be brought in from now through Christmas.

2025 Directory

Since the time of our last pictorial directory, we have welcomed new faces and said goodbye to members who have passed. It is time for an update! Throughout the month of December, please stop by the Library any Sunday before or after worship to have your photo taken and make sure your contact information is correct. All who wish to be included in the directory, whether member or friend, are encouraged to participate.

Christmas Joy Special Offering

Each year during the Advent and Christmas season, we turn our eyes to Bethlehem and celebrate the wondrous gift of Jesus Christ, our Savior. God has blessed the church with incredible leadership in every time and place, but those leaders often need to be supported by their communities as well. This Offering addresses the support needed by some of our leaders, including supporting leadership development for communities of color and providing support for Presbyterian church workers in their time on need. We will collect this offering Sunday, December 22. Offering envelopes will be provided.

5th Sunday Lunch – December 29th

Sunday, December 29th, we invite you to join us in the fellowship hall after worship for 5th Sunday lunch. Please let us know on your blue response sheet if you plan to attend.

Holiday office hours

The church office will be closed December 24-25th and December 31-January 1st.

NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Our calling at Northminster is to make disciples, to grow in faith together, and to serve others in Christ.

CONGREGATION: Ministers of the Good News; SESSION of Ruling Elders: Kari Alderman; Mark Brown; Jeff Denny; Barbara Fatkin; Nita McCord; Michael Napier; Donna Shuford; Amanda Smith; Minor Vernon; Gail Walker
RALPH HAWKINS, Pastor and Teaching Elder PAUL EVANS, Parish Associate
KAREN JONES, Clerk of Session JENNIFER WHITEHEAD, Ministry Assistant

Office hours: Tuesday-Friday 9:00-1:00; Sunday 7:00-1:00; Jennifer Cell: 478-318-7911