

Welcome to
WILSON MEMORIAL UNION CHURCH
A Member Congregation, International Council of Community Churches



December 17, 2023

Third Sunday in Advent

10:00 a.m.

7 Valley Road
Watchung, NJ

Phone: (908) 755-5020

Website: www.wilsonmemorialchurch.org

Email: admin@wilsonmemorialchurch.org

DEC. 17, 2023

Third Sunday of Advent

10:00 AM



Please rise as you are able, in body or in spirit

Bold print indicates a unison reading.

PRELUDE

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Ricky Francese

PROCESSIONAL

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Madrigal Singers

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

The candle of joy will be lit by the Camuccio Family.

WELCOME

Rev. Michael Droege

CALL TO WORSHIP

Liturgist, Judy Wall

(Psalm 34 in conversation with the Magnificat)

Have you noticed? Are you paying attention? God is doing a new thing.

We watch and wait with joy.

You know the captives? God is bringing freedom. You know the brokenhearted? God is bringing healing.

We watch and wait with joy.

Beloved, listen. God is calling you. To be freed and to free your neighbors. To be healed and to heal your community. To testify to the Light among us.

We watch and wait with joy.

So, let us join our voices and our hearts as we proclaim the story of the one whose coming we anticipate and yet is already as close as our own breath.

We watch and wait with joy.

OPENING PRAYER

Holy God of Joy,

We rejoice in the reality of who you are.

We live within the joy of your love for us.

Our contentment comes and goes.

Our happiness ebbs and flows.

Our feelings depend upon our circumstances,

our physical health, our brain chemistry.

But our joy is deeply rooted

in our identity as your beloved children.

And we give you thanks. Amen.



HYMN##188

Angels We Have Heard on High



PRAYER OF RECONCILIATION

(All who wish are invited to participate verbally in our prayer of reconciliation.)

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent, for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.



ASSURANCE OF PARDON



PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

One: Peace be with you.

All: And also with you.

PRAYERS OF GOD'S PEOPLE

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

ANTHEM

In the Bleak Mid-Winter

Madrigal Singers



DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,

praise him all creatures here below; praise him above, you heavenly host,

praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.



PRAYER OF GRATITUDE

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion-- to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.

They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.



GLORIA PATRI

**Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen, Amen.**

SERMON

Joy Among the Ruins

Rev. Michael Droege

ANTHEM

Jubilate Deo, Bring A Torch, Carol of the Bells

Madrigal Singers



BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Wassail, Wassail

Ricky Francese

How to Support the Work of Wilson Memorial Church

In Service: You are invited to place your offerings in the plate at the back of the Sanctuary.

By Mail: Gifts can be sent to the office at:
7 Valley Road
Watchung, NJ 07069

Online: Use our secure giving portal by clicking the “Giving” link on our website; www.wilsonmemorialchurch.org

Text-to-Give: Text WILSONCHURCH to (908) 460-8818 and follow the setup prompts for your first time. Once set up, you can simply text the gift amount to the above number.

Follow us on social media @mywilsonchurch

How to reach Pastor Michael: You can schedule an appointment online at calendly.com/michaeldroege or call the office for assistance at (908) 755-5020. In any kind of crisis, you can always call Pastor Michael at (908) 755-5589

Rev. Michael Droege, Pastor
Timothy Walton, Director of Music & Worship Arts
Matthew May, Lay Minister
Ricky Francese, Accompanist
Pam Cox, Bell Choir Director
Jacob Feldman, A/V Specialist
Tina Kelly, Administrator
Harold Kreis, Sexton
The Rev. Barbara Peters, Pastor Emerita
Lisa Renaud, Frippery (908)625-5042

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Wilson welcomes **The Madrigal Singers from Franklin High School and Trinity United Church with Pastor Amy Sandlin** to join us at Worship today.

Potluck Brunch: Join us today to celebrate Matthew May! We are grateful for his time here on staff and even happier to have him as a new member.

Coat Drive: WoW will be collecting warm weather items throughout the season. The group will meet again on February 1st at 11:30am to coordinate Ash Wednesday (Feb. 14th) and soup suppers.

For Prayer: Family and friends are invited to a celebration of life memorial service with lunch to follow for Ruth Chalker on Saturday, December 23, 2023, at 11:00AM at Wilson Memorial Church • Joe Higgins, grateful for his successful surgery • Continued prayers for Lou and Sharon Mancini's son, Lou.

Blue Christmas Service: Join us on Dec. 21st at 6pm in the Sanctuary for the winter solstice and to share in the opportunity to focus on the promise of hope.

★Christmas Eve Worship Services:

10am Morning Family Service • 11pm Candlelight Service

Hats and Hymns: Use the form on the welcome table to submit your favorite hymns for our Worship Service on December 31st.

Today's insert is "The 12 days of Christmas" acts of kindness and activities. On Friday, Dec. 29th please join us for a movie and popcorn at 6pm.

Have a photo you'd like to share? We have an email to collect them all. Please send them to wilsonphotos@wilsonmemorialchurch.org