

December 10, 2023
10:30 AM Service of Worship
2nd Sunday of Advent

Gathering Around the Word

PRELUDE Alison and Rebecca Simpson

WELCOME

LIGHTING OF THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE Deacons

RESPONSE *Light One Candle*

*Light one candle for peace,
One bright candle for peace,
He brings peace to ev'ry heart,
He comes, He comes! (Repeat)*

*CALL TO WORSHIP Laurie Winans

Leader: In God's house, we can be joyful.

People: We can be grateful. We can be hopeful.

Leader: In God's house, we can be weary.

People: We can be anxious. We can be grieving.

Leader: In God's house, we can be honest –

**People: Inspired or tired, delighted or doubtful,
connected or curious, and everything in between.**

Leader: This is God's house. You are welcome exactly as you are.

All: Let us worship the Lord our God!

*HYMN #106 *Prepare the Way, O Zion*

*CALL TO CONFESSION

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**God of laughter,
God of open front doors,
God of family reunions,
We confess that we often doubt good news.
We move through this world
waiting for the other shoe to drop,
waiting for life to fall apart,
waiting for our humanity to get the best of us.**

**Instead of leaning into joy, we lean into scarcity.
We lean into fear. We lean into isolation.
Forgive us for forgetting that joy is amplified when shared.
Heal the wounds we have from past hurts,
and teach us how to open our doors like Elizabeth.
Show us how to find joy in connection.**

*SILENT CONFESSION

*ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

*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.

*THE PASSING OF GOD'S LOVE AND PEACE
The peace of Christ be with you all ... **And also with you.**

Proclaiming the Word

CHILDREN'S SERMON Noelle Steller

FIRST LESSON Luke 1:24-38 p. 1012-1013
This is the Word of the Lord ... **Thanks be to God.**

ANTHEM *What Child Is This?* Choir, Catie Jewell
Alison and Rebecca Simpson

SECOND LESSON Luke 1:39-45 p. 1013
This is the Word of the Lord ... **Thanks be to God.**

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SERMON "Joy in Connection" Pastor Stephen Choi

Responding to the Word

*DECLARATION OF FAITH (Insert) The Nicene Creed

*HYMN #93 *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & 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

OFFERTORY

Alison and Rebecca Simpson

*DOXOLOGY

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all people here below;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;
Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.*

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Bearing and Following the Word

*HYMN #727

The Servant Song

*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

*RESPONSE #541

God Be with You Till We Meet Again

*God be with you till we meet again;
Loving counsels guide, uphold you,
With a shepherd's care enfold you:
God be with you till we meet again.*

*POSTLUDE

Alison and Rebecca Simpson

*Please stand if able

Stewartsville Presbyterian Church

The Ministers: All the Members

The Rev. Stephen Park Choi, Pastor

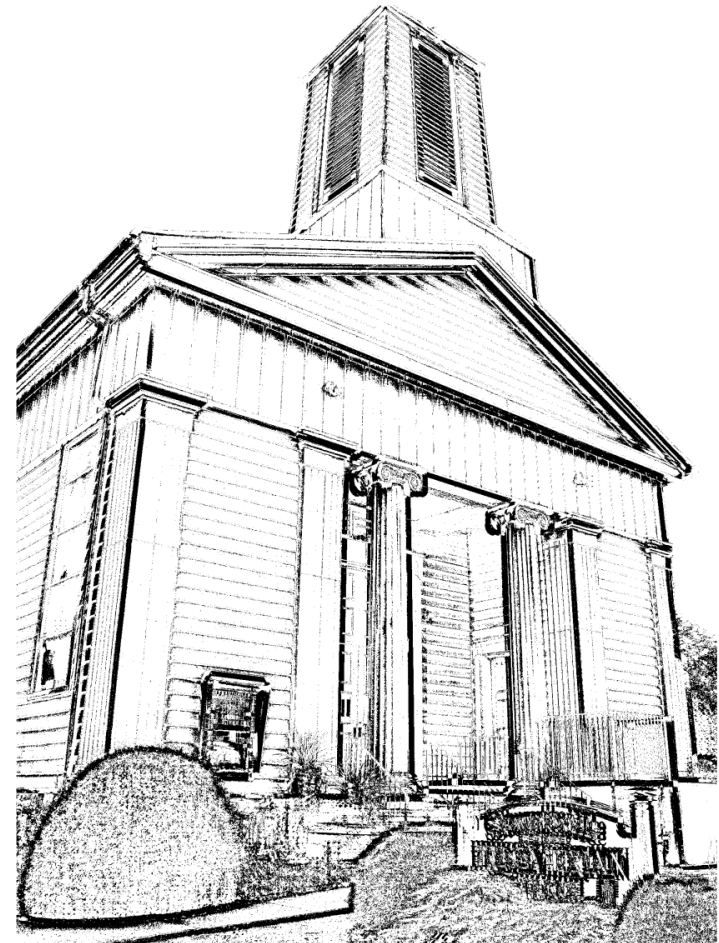
Brian Ballentine, Music Director

Denise DeMasi, Choir Director

Laura Choi, Christian Education Director

Renée Herb, Office Manager

STEWARTSVILLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



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Christmas Eve Worship Service. Please join us for our Christmas Eve Worship Service at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 24.

Holy Communion will be celebrated during this service of Lessons and Carols.

The Sunday School Christmas Program will be presented during the 10:30 a.m. worship service on Sunday, Dec. 24.

Offering received during our 7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service will go toward the mission and ministry of our church. You may use the special envelope in your offering envelope box.

The Giving Tree. Thank you to everyone who participated in our Giving Tree.

Because of your kindness, we were able to provide gifts and \$100 in gift cards for 46 children and families through the Division of Child Protection and Permanency (formerly DYFS).

Devotionals. The December daily devotionals are available in the back of the sanctuary, or by calling the church office.

Pray for This Week's Mission Partner: The Presbyterian Depot.

The Presbyterian Depot is a collaborative mission partnership of Old Greenwich, Pilgrim, Alpha, and Stewartsville Presbyterian Church.

Our mission is to provide new kitchen items to individuals and families who are transitioning to a new place to live; many have virtually nothing to start with. The area organizations we have worked with include Family Promise, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Assault Crisis Center, and Firth Youth Center.

OUR CONGREGATION IN MINISTRY

Assisting in Worship Today

Laurie Winans

Greeter Today

Terry Wolfinger

Broadcast Team

Alan Deak and

Bill Fleming

Nursery Today

Janis Clark and

Sarah Sampson

Hosting Time for Fellowship

Fellowship Committee

Week Ahead at Stewartsville Presbyterian Church

Today, 12/10: Time for Fellowship after Worship Service

AA, 6:00 p.m., Roan Hall

Wednesday, 12/13: AA, 7:00 p.m., Roan Hall

Thursday, 12/14: Adult Lunch Group, 11:30 a.m., Palace Restaurant

Friday, 12/15: Fiber Arts, 9:30 a.m., Roan Hall

Sunday, 12/17: Sunday School, 9:20 a.m.

Cookie Exchange, 9:45 a.m., Roan Hall

Worship Service, 10:30 a.m.

Congregational Meeting after Worship Service

Christmas Caroling after Congregational Meeting

AA, 6:00 p.m., Roan Hall

This Week's Birthdays and Anniversaries

Today, 12/10: Stella Bove

Monday, 12/11: John Muentener III

Tuesday, 12/12: Justin Jewell

Wednesday, 12/13: Carly Alpaugh

Friday, 12/15: Gabrielle Poremba

Chris Winans

Saturday, 12/16: Tammy Oberly

John & Heidi Hawk – Anniversary

Announcements

Welcome. Thank you for choosing to worship with us today. We invite you to sign the pew pad as they are being passed. Restrooms are located downstairs in Roan Hall. We hope that the service is a blessing to you, and we look forward to seeing you again soon.

Time for Fellowship. Please join us for Time for Fellowship after our worship service today in Roan Hall. This is an informal time where we can share refreshments and conversations with one another.

Announcements (continued)

Special Music. Today, we welcome harpists Alison Simpson and Rebecca Simpson to our worship service.

Alison Simpson is a free-lance professional harpist in the Tri-State area. She graduated from the Cleveland Institute of Music with a Bachelor of Music in Harp Performance. Alison has performed in Carnegie Hall and the Philadelphia Academy of Music and was a former solo performer with Young Audiences of New Jersey. She served 3 terms as President of the Philadelphia Chapter of the American Harp Society and was co-chair for the 2004 National Harp Conference. Alison maintains a private studio in Doylestown, PA.

Rebecca Simpson is a classically trained harpist living and performing in the Philadelphia area. She earned a Bachelor of Music from the Blair School of Music at Vanderbilt University and a Master of Music from the Boyer College of Music and Dance at Temple University. Rebecca has performed with the Curtis Symphony Orchestra, the National Symphony Orchestra of Cuba, Symphony in C, Wilmington Ballet Company, Bay Atlantic Symphony, Southeastern Pennsylvania Symphony, Warminster Symphony Orchestra, and other local orchestras.

Cookie Exchange. We will hold our annual Cookie Exchange next Sunday, Dec. 17, at 9:45 a.m. in Roan Hall. Please see the insert in today's bulletin for more information.

The deadline to sign up is TODAY, Dec. 10.

Adult Lunch Group. "Grazing with Grace," our Adult Lunch Group will meet this Thursday, Dec. 14, at 11:30 a.m. at the Palace Restaurant, 3250 Easton Ave., Bethlehem, PA.

In celebration of Christmas, we will take up a collection which will be donated to a charity to be determined at the luncheon.

If you plan to attend the luncheon, please call Louisa Miers at 908-763-3861 by tomorrow, Dec. 11 to make your reservation. Also, contact Louisa if you need a ride or directions to the restaurant.

Congregational Meeting. There will be a brief Congregational Meeting after the worship service next Sunday, Dec. 17. The purpose of the meeting is to elect a new class of Elders and Deacons.

Christmas Caroling. Everyone is invited to go caroling after worship next Sunday, Dec. 17. We will sing Christmas carols to our homebound members and deliver cookies to them. If you plan on attending, please speak with Linda Williams or Pastor Stephen.

2024 Offering Envelopes. The 2024 Offering Envelopes are available on the table in the back of the sanctuary.

If you would like envelopes but don't see your name, please contact the church office. Also contact the office if you need your envelopes mailed to you.

Christmas Joy Offering. We are receiving the Christmas Joy Offering throughout the Advent season. By giving to the Christmas Joy Offering, you will help families of active and retired church workers, and support Presbyterian-related schools and colleges to provide education and leadership development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage.

Please use the special envelope in your box of envelopes, or write a check with "Christmas Joy" on the memo line.

To give online at the church website go to www.stewartsvillepc.org, Give Now, Special and note "Christmas Joy."

Israel/Palestine Response. In response to the violence in and around Israel/Palestine, **Presbyterian Disaster Assistance** is providing humanitarian assistance through partners on the ground and through ACT Alliance.

Response efforts encompass a wide array of vital humanitarian interventions, including but not limited to medical supplies, shelter, WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene), food and non-food items, and delivering crucial psychosocial support to individuals.

If you would like to give to the relief efforts, please write a check and note "PDA" on the memo line.

For online giving, go to the church website at www.stewartsvillepc.org, Give Now, Special, and note "PDA."

2024 Pledge Cards. If you have not already returned your 2024 Pledge Card and Time & Talent Sheet, please put them in the offering plate, or mail them to the church office as soon as possible. Extra Pledge Cards and Time & Talent Sheets are available in the back of the sanctuary, or by calling the church office.

2023 Giving Statements. Offering received by Sunday, Dec. 31, will be counted toward your 2023 Giving Statement. Offering received after that date will count toward your 2024 statement.

Catholic Charities Food Pantry. We continue to donate food and toiletries to the Catholic Charities Food Pantry.

At this time, the food pantry is in particular need of cereal, soup, canned vegetables and fruit, and tuna fish, as well as grocery bags.