

NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Welcome to Christ's Service of Worship for the Lord's Day

December 8, 2024
Second Sunday of Advent



WE WELCOME YOU TO WORSHIP! You are special, because God brought you here today. Together we celebrate and rejoice in God's blessings in our lives!

GATHER JOYFULLY

THE PRELUDE

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR PRAYER AND PREPARATION

Malachi 3:1-4; Luke 1:68-79; Philippians 1:3-11

(Congregants are encouraged to read and reflect upon these passages as they prepare for worship.)

BUILDING THE BODY

GATHERING HYMN 85 *Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah*

Light two candles to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness.
He is coming; tell the glad tidings. Let your lights be shining.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Jake and Lilly Hayes

THE CALL TO WORSHIP (responsive)

Minister: Our God is the One Who comes to us

in a burning bush, in an angel's song, in a newborn child.

Congregants: Our God is the One Who cannot be found

locked behind church walls or held in meaningless traditions.

Minister: Watch...for you know not when God comes

or how He comes.

Congregants: Watch, so that you will know and follow

whenever, wherever, however God comes.

Minister: Let us worship the ever-present and approaching God!

*HYMN OF PRAISE 96 *On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry*

*PRAYER OF PRAISE AND CONFESSION (unison)

Come, Lord Jesus, for our hearts long to greet you this day.

You alone are our salvation, our strength, our comfort,

and in this season of Advent anticipation, we seek your presence.

Your grace and mercy overwhelm us, and we give you our thanks.

We know well that our need for you is deep,

for we cannot cleanse ourselves of our sin or fix our broken world

apart from your forgiving and redeeming spirit.

Too often we have accepted the shadows around us

**and have not carried your light where there is darkness.
We live afraid of the power of your love for us,
and we confess that we do not always live up to your call.
Forgive us, we pray, and help us to be true witnesses
to the power of your birth, death, and resurrection in our lives.
Hear these our silent and private prayers.**

***ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

Hear Good News!

The one true God, the God of creation, the God of all that is,
that God loves each of us so much that He has chosen
to come into our world, as Jesus Christ, as one of us,
to carry our burdens, to heal our brokenness, to guide our path,
to forgive our sinfulness, to overcome the finality of our death,
so that we might know salvation, and live with Him
in glory and goodness forever. In Christ, life is made anew!
Praise be to God!

***RESPONSE HYMN 107**

Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn (Verse 4)

**Rejoice, rejoice, take heart in the night. Though dark the winter and cheerless,
the rising sun shall crown you with light; be strong and loving and fearless.
Love be our song and love our prayer and love our endless story; may God fill
every day we share and bring us at last into glory.**

GROW SPIRITUALLY

THE FIRST READING OF GOD'S WORD Isaiah 40:1-11

¹Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. ²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. ³A voice cries out: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. ⁵Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.' ⁶A voice says, 'Cry out!' And I said, 'What shall I cry?' All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. ⁷The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass. ⁸The grass withers,

the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand for ever. ⁹ Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, 'Here is your God!' ¹⁰ See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. ¹¹ He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

THE PASTORAL PRAYER / 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.

ANTHEM *Wild and Lone the Prophet's Voice* Hymn 163

Wild and lone the prophet's voice
echoes through the desert still,
calling us to make a choice,
bidding us to do God's will:
"Turn from sin and be baptized;
cleanse your heart and mind and soul.
Quitting all the sins you prized,
yield your life to God's control.

"Bear the fruit repentance sows:
lives of justice, truth, and love.
Trust no other claim than those;
set your heart on things above.
Soon the Lord will come in power,
burning clean the threshing floor:
then will flames the chaff devour;
wheat alone shall fill God's store."

With such preaching, stark and bold,
John proclaimed salvation near,
and his timeless warnings hold
words of hope to all who hear.
So we dare to journey on,

led by faith through ways untrod,
till we come at last like John
to behold the Lamb of God.

MESSAGE FOR YOUNG DISCIPLES

THE SECOND READING OF GOD'S WORD Mark 1:1-8

¹The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ²As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; ³the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight" ',⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, 'The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.'

THE PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (unison)

**Heavenly Father, Your Word is truth, it is strength, it is comfort.
Your Word is light for our path, it is hope for our despair.
Your Living Word, the Word made flesh, is Jesus Christ.
May we encounter and engage that Living Word,
and hear his call of love, peace, and joy. Amen.**

SERMON

SEEING THE LIGHT

Russ Merritt

*HYMN OF COMMITMENT 87 *Comfort, Comfort Now My People*

* PRESENTATION AND DEDICATION OF GIFTS (unison)

**Holy God, we thank You that we have heard Your Word,
Your call for our repentance and transformation.
As a sign of gratitude, we offer these gifts now.
Take what we bring, and use it for good:
for the good of our faith community,
and for the good of Your world.
We offer our prayers in the name of Jesus Christ,
the one whose life gives life to all. Amen.**

*THE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH *The Apostles' Creed* (unison)

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy universal church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

GO FAITHFULLY

*HYMN OF DEDICATION 106 *Prepare the Way, O Zion*

*CHARGE

*THE BENEDICTION

THE POSTLUDE

YOUR SERVICE

*Indicates the People Standing

Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-A-737649 . All rights reserved. Used by permission CCLI#1241295

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We light the Baptismal Candle today to remember **Skylar Elise Kirby** who was presented for baptism by her parents, Daniel and Lauren on December 5, 2021. Celebrating with her are her grandparents, Tom and Lynn Kirby, along with Aunt and Uncle Margie and Greg Cundiff and great grandparents, Stan and Elise Lanford. May we all remember the promise we made to help guide Skylar as she grows in the Christian faith.

Circle 1 will meet on Tuesday, December 10th, at 11:30 at the Bistro at Friendship Manor for lunch.

JOY GIFT FELLOWSHIP LUNCHEON – You are invited to join our Joy Gift Luncheon on December 15th following our worship service. If you plan to attend the luncheon, please sign the attendance sheet which has been placed on the table in the narthex so we can get an accurate count of how many people will be attending.

Our Men's Fellowship Breakfasts will meet Thursday, December 19th, at 8:30 a.m. at Pete's Deli. It's a great way to start your day; come join us!

The FESTIVAL OF LESSONS AND CAROLS will be held on Sunday, December 22nd during our 11am worship service. The service includes the reading of nine lessons, carols by the choirs and seasonal hymns.

A SPECIAL SERVICE OF WORSHIP will be held on Christmas Eve, December 24, at 4:00, and will include special music, candle lighting, and the celebration of the sacrament of Holy Communion, as well as a special Christmas message. Please make your plans to attend, and to bring family and friends!

The Mitten Tree is up in the narthex and ready to be decorated with hats, gloves, pjs, underwear and any other small piece of clothing a needy family would need.

We are again collecting pies for the Rescue Mission. The pies can be of various flavors. If you would like to donate a pie, please bring it to the church kitchen by Sunday, December 22. The Rescue Mission is always very appreciative of the pies we collect for them. Thank you for helping with this project.

PURCHASE OF CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

This Christmas season, our church will be beautifully decorated with poinsettias given in memory of or in honor of loved ones and friends. Please see bulletin insert for more information or call Joe Gwitt (540-819-0517) Deadline will be December 8, 2024.

We are updating the address directory. A copy is in the narthex for you to check and see if your information is correct or changes need to be made.

Calendar

Today	10:00 am	Seekers Class
	11:00 am	Worship Service
Tuesday	11:30 am	Circle 1at the Bistro
Next Sunday	10:00 am	Seekers Class
	11:00 am	Worship Service
	12:00 pm	Joy Gift Luncheon

NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
3911 Greenland Avenue, Roanoke, Virginia 24012-3250
WEBSITE:WWW.NORTHMINSTERPCUSA.ORG

Russ Merritt, Pastor Melissa Hudson, Music Director
Susie Tallmage, Secretary
Ministers...Members of Northminster

If you or someone you know should be included in the list of those needing special prayer, please contact the Pastor. If prayers have been answered and we can celebrate God's goodness by removing your name from the list, let the Pastor know.

Let us keep those listed below in our prayers.

Members

Bill Bailey	Frances Bowling	Ellen Brumfield
Pam Claterbaugh	Marie Haines	Walt Haines
Jake Hayes	Hayes Family	Dennis Kincer
Skylar Kirby	Patsy Linton	Floyd Moretz
Ann Pace	Mac Pace	Sarah Plymale
Buddy Smith	Sandy Smith	Vicki Whitworth

Friends and Family

Nancy Assaid	Joaquin Bielawski
Shirley Basham	Donna Betters
Lucy Collier	Terry Foss
Issac Franklin	Gladys Hughston
Vicki Widener	Dan Cone
Glenna Myers	

*THE SESSION *

Clerk of Session: Holly Woodson
Elders: Pam Claterbaugh, Richard Claterbaugh, Dana Esworthy, Matt Graybill, Joe Gwitt,
Maggie Hambrick, Gary Harris, Jyke Jones, Lynn Kirby, Chuck Lockard, Judy Moore, Dora
Slee, Dave Snider, Greg Theimer

