

# Celebration of Worship

## Third Sunday in Advent

December 17, 2023

9:30 A.M.

*We are followers of Jesus Christ, living and sharing  
the love of God through faith and action, welcoming all.*

**Prelude**      *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme BWV 645*      JS Bach

### Words of Welcome and Announcements

**Reflection**      Dietrich Bonhoeffer  
"Christmas is coming – whether it is with us or without us  
depends on each and every one of us."

### Ringing of the Bell

**Song**      *Surely the Presence of the Lord Is in This Place*  
Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place;  
I can feel his mighty power and his grace.  
I can hear the brush of angel's wings; I see glory on each face.  
Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place.

**Lighting the Third Advent Candle**      The Carson Family

**Song**      *O Come, O Come Emmanuel*      # 9 - Verse 3  
O come, Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind;  
Bid envy, strife, and discord cease; fill the whole world with heaven's peace.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

### Call to Worship

Leader: The Lord has done great things for us!

**People: And we are filled with joy!**

Leader: Our God has turned our weeping into singing;

**People: Our tears into songs of joy!**

Leader: O Christ of God, be with us anew in our hearts this day,

**People: And remain with us forever.**

**Hymn**      *Comfort, Comfort You My People*      # 3

### Prayer of Invocation

Leader: Father in heaven, our hearts desire the warmth of your love,  
and our minds are searching for the light of your Word.  
Increase our longing for Christ, our Savior, and give us the  
strength to grow in love that the dawn of his coming may find  
us rejoicing in his presence and welcoming the light of his  
truth. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

### Prayer of Confession

**All:** Merciful God, always with us, always coming, we confess  
that we do not know how to prepare for your Advent. We  
have forgotten how to hope in miracles; we have ignored the  
promise of your kingdom; we get distracted by all the  
busyness of this season.

Forgive us, God. Grant us the simple wonder of the  
shepherds, the intelligent courage of the Magi, and the  
patient faith of Mary and Joseph that we may journey with  
them to Bethlehem and find the good news of a child born  
for us. Now in the quiet of our hearts, we ask you to make  
us ready for his coming. Amen.

Moment of Silence

How can you bear witness, in this season of lights,  
to the true Light who has come into the world?

### Assurance of Pardon

Leader: In Jesus Christ, the Lord has done great things for us! Even  
if we have gone out in tears, God brings us home shouting  
for joy.

**People: Thanks be to God; we are forgiven!**

### Gloria Patri

### Passing the Peace of Christ

### Children's Time

**Hymn**      *On Jordan's Banks the Baptist's Cry*      # 10

**Scripture Reading**      *Psalms 126:1-6*

**Anthem**      *We Are Waiting*      arr. Priscilla Landis  
Chancel Choir;

We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace.

Sun of justice, shine upon us; we are trusting in your promise.

We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace.

We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace.

Loving Shepherd, walk beside us; stir our hearts, and gently guide us.

We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace.

We are waiting. We are waiting. We are waiting.

**Scripture Reading**      *John 1:6-8. 19-28*

**Sermon**      *Your Redemption is Drawing Near*  
Pastor Nadia Mullin

**Affirmation of Faith**

**All:** I hear a voice in the wilderness - "Prepare the way of the Lord; Make straight in the desert a highway for our God."

I believe every valley shall be lifted up and every mountain and hill be made low; I believe the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain; I believe the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

**Sharing Joys and Concerns and Lighting of Prayer Candles**

**Prayer and The Lord's Prayer**

**Invitation to the Offering**

Please place your offering in the plates at the exit doors, mail your gifts to the church, or click the WPC website "Give" button. Thank you!

**Doxology**

**Blessing of the Offering**

**All:** Gracious God, teach us to give thanks in all circumstances, for you are always with us. Thank you for the privilege of sharing what we have with others, of giving ourselves away in love, and of receiving the gifts that others share with us. With our whole being, spirit and soul and body, we rejoice in you. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Hymn** *My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout* Insert

**Benediction**

**Congregational Response (sung)**

While we are waiting, come; while we are waiting, come.  
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.

**Postlude** *Spaseniye Sodelal* Pavel Chesnokov

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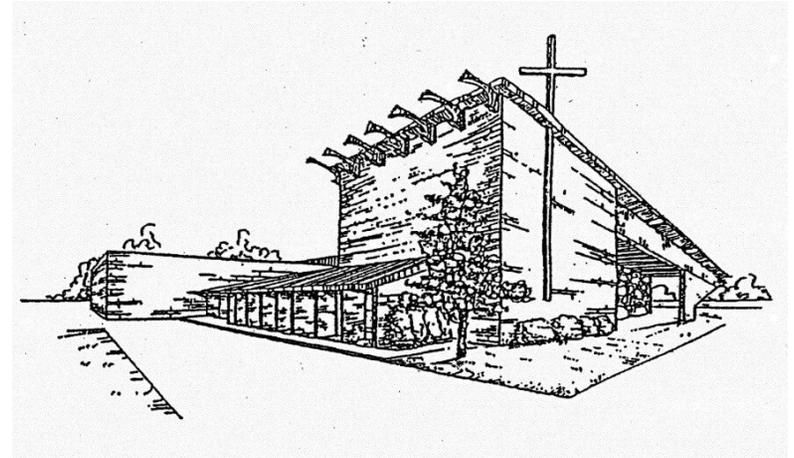
**Webster Presbyterian Church**

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Pastor  
Rev. Nadia Mullin

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### **Comfort, Comfort You My People**

# 3

Comfort, comfort you, my people; tell of peace, thus says our God.

Comfort those who sit in darkness, bowed beneath oppression's load.  
Speak you to Jerusalem of the peace that waits for them.

Tell them that their sins I cover, and their warfare now is over.

For the herald's voice is calling in the desert far and near,

Bidding us to make repentance since the kingdom now is here.

O that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way.

Let the valleys rise in meeting and the hills bow down in greeting.

Make you straight what long was crooked; make the rougher places plain.

Let your hearts be true and humble as befits God's holy reign.

For the glory of the Lord now o'er earth is shed abroad,

And all flesh shall see the token that God's word is never broken.

### **Gloria Patri**

# 579

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.

### **On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry**

# 10

On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry announces that the Lord is nigh.

Awake and hearken, for he brings glad tidings of the King of kings!

Then cleansed be every life from sin; make straight the way for God within,

And let us all our hearts prepare for Christ to come and enter there.

We hail You as our Savior, Lord, our refuge and our great reward.

O let Your face upon us shine and fill the world with love divine.

All praise to You, eternal Son, whose advent has our freedom won,

Whom with the Father we adore, and Holy Spirit evermore.

### **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.

## Next Sunday's Services

**9:30 A.M.**  
**Fourth Sunday in Advent**  
**Lessons and Carols**

**4:00 P.M.**  
**Christmas Eve**  
**Candlelight Communion Service**

## **THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR**

### **Sunday, December 17 - Third Sunday in Advent**

- 9:30 A.M. Worship Service in the Sanctuary & Live-streamed
- 9:45 A.M. Shine Program for Children in PreK through 5<sup>th</sup> Grade
- 10:45 A.M. Advent Theater in the Sanctuary
- 11:45 A.M. Staff Appreciation Luncheon in the Social Room
- 3:00 P.M. Worship at Cherry Ridge
- 5:45 P.M. Girl Scout Troop 489 in the Memorial Room

### **Monday, December 18**

- 4:00 P.M. Spiritual Nurture Committee on Zoom
- 6:30 P.M. Rachel Circle at the home of Gwen Hoffman
- 6:30 P.M. Boy Scout Troop 262 in the Social & Memorial Rooms
- 7:00 P.M. Mission Committee in Room 9/10

### **Tuesday, December 19**

- 9:00 A.M. Women's Bible Study in Room 9/10
- 5:00 P.M. TOPS Meeting in Room 9/10
- 6:30 P.M. Deacons' Meeting in Room 9/10

### **Wednesday, December 20 - January Pathway Deadline**

- 6:30 A.M. Men's Bible Study at Golden Boys' Restaurant
- 8:00 A.M. WIC Social Services Program in the Social Room
- 7:00 P.M. Scout Troop 425 in the Social Room
- 7:30 P.M. ONE in Christ Committee on Zoom

### **Thursday, December 21**

- 7:30 A.M. Men's Bible Study on Zoom
- 10:30 A.M. Glory Bells to Atria Assisted Living Facility
- 1:00 P.M. Small Group on Zoom
- 3:00 P.M. Book Club in Room 1
- 6:00 P.M. Alleluia Bells Rehearsal in the Sanctuary
- 6:30 P.M. Boy Scout Committee in the Memorial Room

### **Friday, December 22**

- 9:30 A.M. Flyers' Club in the Social Room

### **Saturday, December 23**

- 9:00 A.M. Prayer Time on Zoom

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

1. WELCOME to Webster Presbyterian Church! We are pleased that you are worshipping with us, whether in person or by live-streaming. You can live-stream at 9:30 or later at your leisure using:  
**Facebook** <https://www.facebook.com/Websterpres/> or  
**YouTube** <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzM5thYxua2HQSPF6P71wA>  
THIS SERVICE IS LIVESTREAMED on YouTube and Facebook. Participation in and/or observation of the service implies acknowledgement that your image may be seen on the stream at the time of the service and in the future.
2. ADULT ED. at 10:45 in Room 9/10  
Today - Join us following worship in the Sanctuary for the always popular Advent Theater presenting "Clueless at Christmas", a comedy/mystery.
3. STAFF APPRECIATION LUNCHEON is today following Advent Theater - All are welcome to join us as we show our appreciation to Pastor Nadia and the church staff.
4. GIFT CARDS FOR GRACE HOUSE MEN - Cards are due today. \$10 cards from McDonalds, Wendy's, Dunkin Donuts, Walmart or Target are much appreciated for men in transitional housing who are on parole, are homeless, or are otherwise disadvantaged.
5. CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING - Donations to benefit students of color in Presbyterian Church sponsored colleges and Presbyterian pastors with urgent financial needs can be made by using the designated envelopes in the chair racks, or you can mail your gift to the church.
6. THE JANUARY PATHWAY DEADLINE is this Wednesday. Please submit articles to [jchippero@websterpres.org](mailto:jchippero@websterpres.org) and [g Hubbard@websterpres.org](mailto:g Hubbard@websterpres.org).

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## **Lectionary Passages**

	<u>Today, December 17<sup>th</sup></u>	<u>December 24<sup>th</sup></u>
Old Testament	<i>Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11</i>	<i>II Samuel 7:1-11, 16</i>
Psalms	<i>Psalms 126</i>	<i>Psalms 89:1-4, 19-26</i>
New Testament	<i>I Thessalonians 5:16-24</i>	<i>Romans 16:25-27</i>
Gospel	<i>John 1:6-8, 19-28</i>	<i>Luke 1:26-38</i>

## **Memory Verse**

*"But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid.  
I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.  
Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you;  
He is the Messiah, the Lord."  
Luke 2:10-11*