

Hope for a weary world

**DECEMBER 17, 2023
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
WILSHIRE BAPTIST CHURCH**

Preparing for worship

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king; peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"

I first remember singing this wonderful song as a youngster at our church Christmas pageant. (Or was it the school pageant? In those bygone days, we sang it at both.) Since then, wherever and whenever I've sung it, waves of hope and goodness have flowed through me.

Until now.

Hope, for me and no doubt others, has dimmed, overshadowed by the death and destruction of war, and the hate — even in our country — that creates such violence, divisive politics that threaten our democracy and climate degradation that could spell the end of the world God created — along with us, his anointed caretakers who seem hellbent on destroying it.

Add to this toxic mix the emergence of artificial intelligence, and it's no wonder peace on earth and mercy mild have become all but alien concepts.

And yet, through the sheer power of faith, a glimmer of hope flickers. A glimmer made brighter by the story of a mother and her son. A lowly peasant with the faith and courage to bring forth the Christ child who would one day embrace the same strong faith and courage to change the world.

Mary, brave and unassuming, did not turn her back when God reached out. Rather, she leaned into the life-changing, difficult task God gave her. So did her son, who, shouldering the legacy his father bestowed on him, sacrificed his own life by speaking truth to power.

When reading the Christmas story, we sometimes overlook these bold, selfless acts of a mother and son. Unlike those who use their power to silence and subjugate, Mary and Jesus used theirs to lift up the oppressed and restore hope and faith in turbulent times. Their actions and sacrifices are beautiful examples of another of God's gifts to us, one that too often lies unopened under the Christmas tree: Her sharing of power to benefit humankind.

Sadly, the use of power to control, marginalize and silence others continues today just as it did 2,000 years ago. The fear, hate and violence it perpetuates has not abated. But God shares his power with us, so that we in turn can use it unselfishly for the good of our fellow men and women and the creation of a gentler world.

This Christmas, let us open this important gift from God and do what is in our power to restore the peace and mercy mild we desperately seek for our troubled world.

—Scott Spreier



4316 Abrams Road | Dallas, Texas 75214 | 214-452-3100 | wilshirebc.org

Building a Community of Faith Shaped by the Spirit of Jesus Christ

Partnered with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship

Member, Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists

December 17, 2023
11:00 a.m.
Third Sunday of Advent

Chiming of the Hour

The people of Wilshire gather this morning to worship God. In order for this service to be focused upon that purpose, please silence all electronic devices.

Welcome to Worshipers Timothy Peoples

Prelude arr. Cynthia Dobrinski
While by My Sheep
Carillon Ringers; Ralph Manuel, director

+Processional Song MENDELSSOHN
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing
No. 127

Lighting the Candle of Joy Cindy and Charlie Estee

Preparing for the Nativity Smith Catarella, Elle Catarella, Abigail Gaines, Jonathan Justice,
Joel Justice, Rinnah Justine, Hamilton Lee, Maggie Stegner, Viola Stegner

A Moment of Joy Laura Summers

As on a Day of Festival by Jan Richardson

Call it
the waters of salvation
or the garlands of gladness.

Call it
the grave-clothes
falling away
or call it the loosing
of the chains.

Call it
what binds us together:
fierce but
fragile but
fierce.

Call it
he will rejoice over you
with gladness;
call it
he will renew you
in his love;
call it
he will exult over you
with loud singing
as on a day
of festival.

Call it
the thin, thin place
where the veil
gives way.

Or call it this:
the path we make
when we go deep
and deeper still
into the dark
and look behind to see
the way has been lit
by our rejoicing.

+All congregants who are able are invited to stand.
Hearing devices are available in the Narthex and South Atrium.

Response

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

VENI EMMANUEL

O come, O come, Em - ma - u - el, and ran-som cap-tive Is - ra - el, that
mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here, un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
Re - joice! Re-joyce! Em - man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

+Gospel Reading — Luke 1:39-55

Allyson and Caroline Cook

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." And Mary said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant.
Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name;
indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
He has brought down the powerful from their thrones
and lifted up the lowly;
he has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.
He has come to the aid of his child Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

For the Word of God in Scripture,
For the Word of God among us,
And for the Word of God within us,
Thanks be to God!

Solo

Christmas Offering
Ariel Merivil

Paul Baloche/arr. Ariel Merivil

Over the skies of Bethlehem appeared a star.
While angels sang to lowly shepherds.
Three wise ones seeking truth they traveled from afar.
Hoping to find the child from heaven,
And falling on their knees, they bow before the humble Prince of Peace.

We bring an offering of worship to our King
No one on earth deserves the praises that we sing
Jesus, may you receive the honor that you're due
O Lord, I bring an offering to you.

The sun cannot compare to the glory of your love.
There is no shadow in your presence.
No mortal man would dare to stand before your throne,
Before the Holy One of heaven.
It's only by your love; it's only through your mercy, Lord, I come.

O Come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Prayers of the People

Lynette DeBose

Choral Offertory

The Inn at the End of the World
Sanctuary Choir

Heather Sorenson

There is heard a hymn when the panes are dim, and never before, never again,
When the nights are strong with a darkness long, and the dark is alive with rain.
And our hope lies dead where the leaves lie red for the flame of the sun is flown.
And our hearts lie cold where the leaves are gold, then a Child comes forth alone.
And at night we win to the ancient inn, where the Child in the frost is furled.
And we follow the feet where all souls meet at the inn at the end of the world.
O come to my heart, Lord Jesus.
There's room in my heart, Lord Jesus.
Then all earth, rejoice, matching heaven's voice when the dark and the cold are cured.
And we follow the feet where all souls meet at the inn at the end of the world.

Leader: And Mary sang: “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.”

People: How can it be that two millenia later and seven thousand miles from Galilee, we hear Mary’s voice?

Leader: She is still singing: “God has looked on the lowliness of his servant ... the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is God’s name.”

People: That cannot be Mary’s voice. A Palestinian peasant girl from Nazareth would have nothing to celebrate, nor the courage to speak. But whoever is singing cannot keep her news to herself. Listen. The voice is louder, closer now, speaking our language.

Leader: “God has scattered the proud ... God has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly.”

People: She is singing the song of salvation. Hers is a song of justice and liberation. Mary invites us to sing with her because the poor, the persecuted are with us now as they were with her. They need to hear the new life in the lyrics, echoing through the centuries. As Mary releases the control of others, she accepts the blessing of the Divine invitation to announce the arrival of God.

Leader: “God has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.”

People: Every note announces that God is on the side of the oppressed, the disenfranchised, the hungry, the poor, the broken hearted. Every word announces the incarnation that God had promised Mary’s ancestors in the faith, and ours.

Leader: All you who hear Mary’s voice, will you join her song?

People: Yes! We will sing for those who have no voice. We will join the chorus, singing that Emmanuel God is with us.

Leader: So let us proclaim together:

People: “God has done great things for us, and holy is God’s name!”

—Sharlande Sledge, inspired by Luke 1:46-55

Message "Joy for a Weary World" Timothy Peoples

We pause in silence to reflect and to be attentive to the Spirit of God.

+Congregational Song *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice!* IN DULCI JUBILO
No. 122

Sharing of Decisions Timothy Peoples

Benediction Timothy Peoples

Postlude Improvisation on themes of the day Jeff Brummel

Mark Miller, violin; Andres Bravo, violin; Ute Miller, viola
Gayane Fullford, cello; Margaret Fischer, flute/piccolo; Sharon Lacey, oboe
John Searcy, bassoon; Alex Kiele, horn; Bert Truax, trumpet;
Carla Siegesmund, harp; Jeff Brummel, piano; Joshua Brown, percussion

A special business meeting for the purpose of calling a
new minister of music will begin in the Sanctuary at 12:15 p.m.



Connect with Wilshire. Scan the QR code using your smartphone camera to make a financial contribution, fill out our online guest card or submit a prayer request. You may also use the response card or offering envelope found in the pew rack. These items can be placed in the offering plate or in one of the secure offering boxes located near the Sanctuary exits.

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Meet today's worship leaders

Allyson Cook and her husband, Matt, joined Wilshire in 2019. They are the parents of Nathaniel, who attends the University of Arkansas, and **Caroline**, a junior at Lake Highlands High School. Allyson attends Seekers Class and serves on the Pathways to Ministry Committee. She works at UT Southwestern Medical Center in the area of family and community medicine. Caroline is active in Wilshire's student ministry and sings in Youth Choir. At school she participates in choir, Junior World Affairs and National Honor Society.

Lynette DeBose joined Wilshire in 2017. She sings in Sanctuary Choir, serves on the Minister of Music Search Committee and the New Member Committee, attends Discovery Class and is a Faith in 3D participant. Lynette works as an office administrator at RE/MAX.

Charlie and Cindy Estee joined Wilshire in April. They attend Cord of Three class, serve on the Lord's Supper Ministry Team and are active in Wilshire's missions and advocacy work, volunteering at the Wilkinson Center and the Stewpot. Cindy also volunteered at Wilshire's children's Cooking Camp this summer. Charlie and Cindy are both retired attorneys. They have two adult children and three grandchildren.

Ariel Merivil is with us today in view of a call to become Wilshire's next minister of music. He is currently associate minister of music at First-Plymouth Congregational Church in Lincoln, Nebraska. Learn more about Ariel and today's vote on pages 10 and 11.

Laura Summers is the daughter of Kevin and Tamara Summers. She is a senior at Prince of Peace Christian School, where she participates in cross-country and serves as National Honor Society chaplain. Laura sings with the Greater Dallas Choral Society and studies voice and piano. At Wilshire, she serves on the Minister of Music Search Committee and is active in student ministry, singing in Youth Choir and Shekinah.

Alison Wingfield and her husband, Mark, joined Wilshire in 1999. They are parents to twin adult sons, Luke and Garrett. Alison is a member of Epiphany Class and often teaches other adult classes. She is a deacon, directs Pre-K Choir, serves on the Preschool Education Committee and sings in Sanctuary Choir and Nova. Alison works as a freelance editor.

Staff contacts

Phone numbers: 214-452- followed by extension shown below. **Email addresses:** first letter of first name and full last name followed by @wilshirebc.org (example: tpeoples@wilshirebc.org). Staff members without phone extensions do not have Wilshire email addresses.

Communications

- Mark McKenzie, Communications Director (3169)

Congregational Care

- Barbara Clayton, Pastoral Care Assistant (3125)
- Linda Garner, Parish Nurse (3151)
- Carolyn Murray, Coordinator of Congregational Life (3170)
- Heather Mustain, Associate Pastor (3110)

Early Childhood Learning Center

- Kelly Akins, Assistant Director and Curriculum Specialist (3139)
- Ramona Randle, Director (3140)

Finance

- Lori Gooden, Director of Finance (3131)

Food Services

- Luke Munion, Food Service Staff
- Haley Robinson, Food Service Director (3117)
- Gillian Tinsley, Food Service Staff
- Elias Vasquez, Food Service Staff
- Leyvi Vasquez, Food Service Staff
- Wilfredo Velasquez-Cruz, Food Service Staff

Hospitality & Facilities

- Maricela Escutia, Facilities Supervisor
- Holly Irvin, Director of Hospitality (3150)
- Daniel Latin, Facilities
- Leticia Medina, Facilities
- Kevin Sierra, Facilities
- Leticia Vega, Facilities
- Glenda Williams, Receptionist (3165)

Missions & Advocacy

- Abbey Adcox, Missions and Advocacy Coordinator (3127)
- Heather Mustain, Associate Pastor (3110)

Music & Worship

- Jeff Brummel, Associate Minister of Music/Organist (3122)
- Charlie Fuller, Interim Minister of Music (3123)
- Shana Gaines, Wilshire Winds Director (3163)
- Ralph Manuel, Handbell Coordinator (3161)
- Candy McComb, Children's Choir Coordinator (3124)

Operations & Technology

- Rene Altamirano, Maintenance Technician
- Merik Gillett, Operations Director (3146)
- Eric Mirochna, IT Manager (3136)

Pathways to Ministry

- John Kelly, McIver Fellow (3156)
- George Mason, Pathways to Ministry Alumni Director and Senior Pastor Emeritus (3133)

Senior Pastor

- Debby Burton, Executive Assistant (3132)
- Geri McKenzie, Executive Director of Administration (3159)
- Timothy Peoples, Senior Pastor (3132)

Spiritual Formation

- Carol Cabaniss, Spiritual Formation Coordinator (3106)
- Darren DeMent, Associate Pastor (3102)
- Julie Girards, Minister to Children (3104)
- Staci Langley, Childcare Coordinator
- Katie Murray, Minister to Senior Adults (3129)
- Barbara Peterson, Librarian (3114)

Minister of Music Call Weekend culminates in vote today

Candidate Ariel Merivil leads in worship

Ariel Merivil will lead in worship today in view of a call to become Wilshire's next minister of music. The Minister of Music Search Committee unanimously recommended Ariel as its final candidate to the Personnel Committee after a months-long search. Ariel is currently associate minister of music at First-Plymouth Congregational Church in Lincoln, Nebraska.

After worship there will be a short break before a special church business meeting in the Sanctuary at 12:15 p.m. The purpose of the meeting is to vote on calling Ariel.

Today's events are the culmination of a busy Call Weekend which began Thursday. Ariel participated in three open Meet and Greet sessions, met with staff and the search committee and led a special Sanctuary Choir rehearsal on Saturday.

Here's how today's vote will work:

■ Voting will be conducted by private paper ballot. Members, please make every effort to pick up your ballot in James Gallery on Dec. 17 between 9:15 a.m. and 11 a.m. Distribution will stop at 11 and will resume from the end of worship until 12:15 p.m.

■ In accordance with Wilshire bylaws, only Wilshire members present in the Sanctuary may



vote. To be eligible, you must have joined the church by Dec. 6, 10 days prior to the meeting.

■ After votes have been collected, the meeting will be recessed for votes to be counted. Members may stay in the Sanctuary during counting or leave if needed. The meeting will then be called back into session and the results announced. We will email the members later in the day to announce the result.

■ Worship Care will be extended to allow preschool families to attend the business meeting. Parents should pick up their children during the vote-counting recess.



Sundays: Worship at 11 a.m. Sunday School for all ages at 9:45 a.m. Our service livestreams at youtube.com/wilshirebaptist and at wilshirebc.org/worship/livestream. Keep up with Wilshire by subscribing to our YouTube channel and following us on Facebook and Instagram.

About Ariel

Since July 2017 Ariel has served as associate minister of music at First-Plymouth Congregational Church, a 5,000-member United Church of Christ congregation in Lincoln, Nebraska. He provides music and program leadership for at least five weekly worship services and directs seven choral and instrumental ensembles for both youth and adults.

Born in Boston and raised in Atlanta, Ariel graduated in 2007 from Southern Polytechnic State University (now Kennesaw State University) in Marietta, Georgia, with a Bachelor of Architecture degree. After working several years for an architectural firm in Atlanta, he earned a dual-concentration Master of Music in choral conducting and organ performance from Georgia State University in 2013.

Prior to his current role, Ariel served 13 years in various ministerial positions of progressive responsibility at Atlanta First United Methodist Church, including director of music, worship and administration from 2014 to 2017 and director of music and worship from 2012 to 2014.

He has conducted, instructed and accompanied high school and collegiate choirs in Nebraska and Georgia and has sung and performed as a soloist in a variety of groups, including the Lincoln Symphony Orchestra, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Atlanta's Chorale – New Creation, Sounding Light and Exigence, as well as at national conventions and in local concert series and music festivals.

Ariel believes “music has the power to elevate our worship and connect us to each other and the divine.” This fuels his commitment to serving and ministering to all members of the congregation. The diversity of his musical background gives him the confidence to lead worship through a variety of musical styles, from classical and traditional hymns and anthems to spirituals, gospel and more. Similarly, his versatility and experience as a vocalist and choral instructor, along with his proficiency as an accompanist,



enable him to lead musicians and congregants across a broad range of musical abilities.

Performances under Ariel's direction reflect his creativity, which he also applies to stimulate participation in choral or instrumental opportunities targeted to accommodate those whose schedules may not permit weekly rehearsals or long-term commitments.

Personable, articulate and humble, he values collaboration in ministry and worship planning. Multiple colleagues and choristers commended the ingenuity and insightfulness of his organizational skills. The depth and earnestness of his Spirit-driven faith have been evident in all of his interactions with the search committee and church staff.

Perhaps fitting for someone with his education background and artistry, Ariel enjoys design, photography and gardening. He also is a cyclist and an accomplished weightlifter, having won multiple competitions in USA Powerlifting since 2016.



Blue Christmas Service

TODAY | 4 P.M. | MCIVER CHAPEL

The holiday season can be difficult for those whose hearts are hurting. If you are carrying the pain of grief or loss, join us this afternoon for a gentle, contemplative time of worship in McIver Chapel. We hope you'll invite friends or family members who might benefit from this service.



Beer & Carols

Carol singalong today

5-7 p.m. | Oak Highlands Brewery
10484 Brockwood Road, Dallas 75238

Join Wilshire friends for a family-friendly carol singalong from 5 to 7 p.m. Associate Pastor Darren DeMent and Wilshire member Molly Shepard will front a live band and lead the singalong of familiar carols and Christmas songs.

The event will also include holiday tunes from Mark McKenzie's jazz trio, which includes two Wilshire staffers: Mark on saxophone and Merik Gillett on drums.

This long-running annual event at Oak Highlands Brewery in Dallas will also include a holiday shopper's market and food trucks from 2 to 7 p.m. The event is free and open to the public.

Christmas Eve

Sunday, Dec. 24

No Sunday School or morning worship

4 p.m. Christmas Eve family service

11 p.m. Christmas Eve liturgical service

Wilshire will offer **Christmas Eve** candle-light services at 4 and 11 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 24. We will not gather for morning worship or Sunday School. The 4 p.m. service will be family-friendly and suitable for all ages, while the 11 p.m. service will be more liturgical, with robed ministers and celebration of the Lord's Supper. No childcare is provided for either service, and both will be livestreamed on our YouTube channel.

■ **Youth Choir** will sing for the 11 p.m.

Christmas Eve service, and Youth Choir alumni of all ages are invited to join in. Meet Jeff in Choral Hall at 10:30 for coffee, a cookie and a quick rehearsal.

■ On Sunday, **Dec. 31**, we will gather for worship at 11 a.m. Sunday School will not meet.

Library nativity sets

Stop by the Library during the holiday season to enjoy a display of nativity sets from around the world. Most are from the collection of Wilshire member Linda Garner.

Tree of Hope and Remembrance

Help decorate Wilshire's Tree of Hope and Remembrance in the South Lobby by writing the name of a loved one as a memorial or your name as a survivor of cancer or another disease. Blank ornaments and markers are provided near the tree, which is decorated with bracelets representing different forms of cancer. Hang your ornament on the tree anytime during Advent and feel free to take it home close to Christmas for your own tree.

New members

- Keri, Damien and Eliana Mitchell with Everly
- Hank Mitchell
- Essie Evans and Bridgett DeHart

Condolences to

Mary Morgan on the death of her grandfather, John Rentschler, Dec. 14.

Wednesday activities on break

Wilshire will not offer regular Wednesday activities on Dec. 20, Dec. 27 or Jan. 3. Wednesday Night Live will resume on Jan. 10, as will Sanctuary Choir. Lunch & Learn is moving to a weekly schedule and will also resume Jan. 10

Office closed week of Christmas

The church office will be closed and staff members will be on vacation from Monday, Dec. 25, through Tuesday, Jan. 2. In addition, the staff will be offsite for a retreat on Wednesday, Jan. 3. If you have an urgent pastoral need during this time, contact Senior Pastor Timothy Peoples at 214-452-3171 or tpeoples@wilshirebc.org.

Year-end giving

- While the church office will be closed the week of Christmas, checks can be dropped into the secure black mailbox accessible from the south parking lot. Checks in the mailbox will be retrieved in time to count as 2023 giving.
- Checks sent through the mail need to be postmarked by Dec. 29.
- Stock gifts will be received until Dec. 29. Email Lori Gooden at lgooden@wilshirebc.org for account information and to let her know about the gift.

Cabaniss moving to music role

Carol Cabaniss will assume a new staff role as Wilshire's music and worship coordinator beginning in January. A Wilshire member since 1992, Carol has served as ministry assistant or coordinator in the areas of spiritual formation and education since joining the staff in 2015.

Wilshire hiring for spiritual formation coordinator

Wilshire is seeking a new spiritual formation coordinator to provide administrative and logistical support for the church's educational ministries across the age spectrum. The position is part-time at 25 to 30 hours per week and reports to Associate Pastor Darren DeMent. To learn more about the position and how to apply, visit wilshirebc.org/employment.

ECLC hiring for admin role

Wilshire's Early Childhood Learning Center is seeking an administrative assistant with bookkeeping experience. The position is part-time at approximately 25 hours per week. To learn more about the job and how to apply, visit wilshirebc.org/employment.

Blood Drive on Dec. 20

The Carter BloodCare bus will be at Wilshire for a blood drive on Wednesday, Dec. 20, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Walk-ins are welcome but appointments are recommended. Find the appointment link at wilshirebc.org/events/blood-drive-122023 or scan the QR code on page 16.

Puerto Rico trip planned



Wilshire will return to Puerto Rico for a mission trip from Feb. 24 to March 2, 2024. Wilshire member Monica Mullins will lead the group, which will partner with First Baptist of Rio Piedras in San Juan. Project details will be announced soon, but no experience is necessary. The cost of the trip will be \$350 to \$400, plus airfare. If you're interested in going or have questions, contact Abbey Adcox at aadcox@wilshirebc.org.

Adventurers San Francisco trip



Plans for the September 2024 Adventurers trip to San Francisco are underway! Join us for sightseeing and community building, including visits to Alcatraz, Muir Woods and Napa Valley. Please complete our interest form at wilshirebc.org/san-fran or in the main office. This doesn't commit you to

going but tells us you're strongly considering it. Registration will start in January. The cost will be, at most, \$2,500 per person, covering transportation, lodging, attractions and some meals. Wilshire Adventurers plans social and education opportunities for those 60 and older. Guests are welcome.

MLK Meal Packing Event

Join us on the MLK Day holiday, Monday, Jan. 15, as we again partner with Rise Against Hunger to pack healthy meals for those in need. The event will be held from 10 a.m. to noon in Community Hall. Our goal is to pack 15,120 meals. This project



is for everyone, with opportunities to serve while seated and while standing. Children are a great help collecting completed bags with help from a parent. Volunteers are needed to help set up starting at 8:30 a.m. and clean up afterward. Rise Against Hunger's mission is to create immediate and long-term solutions to hunger by building resilience, self-sufficiency and empowerment in communities worldwide. Please sign up via the link at wilshirebc.org/events/mlk-meals.



Let's play mahjong!

Women of Wilshire's twice-monthly mahjong sessions are on holiday break, but dates for 2024 have been added to the SignUpGenius. Find the link at wilshirebc.org/events/mahjong.

Women of Wilshire book clubs

■ **Brown Bag Book Club** meets one Thursday a month at noon in Room 1205-L. On **Jan. 4**, the group will discuss Hazel Prior's *How the Penguins Saved Veronica*. Contact: Carolyn Murray (cmurray@wilshirebc.org).

■ **Tuesday Evening Book Club** meets monthly at 6:30 p.m. in the Parlor. On **Jan. 9**, the group will discuss *The Engineer's Wife: a Novel of the Brooklyn Bridge* by Tracey Enerson Wood. Contact: Debby Burton (dburton@wilshirebc.org).

Register for WOW retreat

Registration is open for the Women of Wilshire 2024 retreat, to be held Feb. 9-11 at the Prothro Retreat Center on Lake Texoma. Jillian Mason Shannon will serve as retreat pastor. See full details and register at wilshirebc.org/events/wow-retreat-2024 or scan QR code.

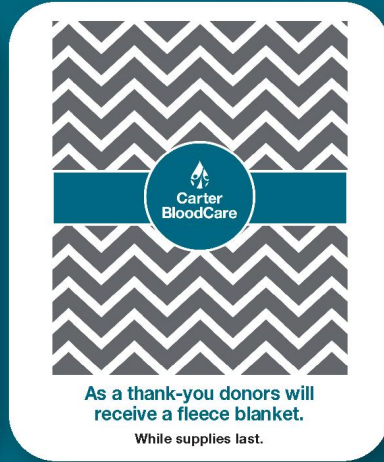




BLOOD DRIVE



Hunter Johnson
of Fort Worth, TX
says, "Thank You!"



As a thank-you donors will
receive a fleece blanket.
While supplies last.

Wed., December 20, 2023
10:00am - 3:00pm

Wilshire Baptist Church
4316 Abrams Rd.
Carter BloodCare Bus

Contact:
Linda Garner, PhD RN
lgarner@wilshirebc.org



Give for Texans.



CarterBloodCare.org
Call 800-366-2834 | Text CBCDonate to 999-777

Ellen Wilkerson

Name: Ellen Wilkerson

Hometown: Lubbock

Present City: Dallas

Education: B.A. History from Baylor University, M.S. Business Management from SMU

Profession: Estate manager

Tell us about your family.

My parents, Gordon and Lori, live in Lubbock and Dallas, and they are both Baylor alumni. My older sister, Rachel, and her husband, Jon, teach in the mathematics department at Baylor and split their time, as it permits, between Waco and England. I love being Aunt Ellie to their two kids, Calvin, 3, and Anna, 1. My younger sister, Caroline, has lived in Malibu and Nashville for school and recently moved to Austin for work. I also have a wonderful calico cat named Sassy adopted from Fuzzy Friends Rescue. Sassy is an expert in window watching and Sunday naps.

Any favorite hobbies?

Baking, reading, gardening, hiking and pickleball. I also enjoy raising and releasing butterflies every year I can.

What are your favorite places to travel?

Some of my favorite places are Santa Fe, Maine and British Columbia. Most summers, I return to the Davis Mountains in West Texas for some incredible stargazing and time at Paisano Baptist Encampment.

What brought you to Wilshire and when?

I have been attending Wilshire intermittently since I moved to Dallas in 2018 and officially



joined as a member in January 2023. I grew up in a Baptist household but have spent time at Methodist and Episcopal churches. Wilshire's exceptional approach to worship and deeply moving music ministry kept drawing me back.

It has been a joy to connect with such welcoming members of the congregation that truly reflect Christ's light.

Where are you engaged at Wilshire?

I teach the kindergarten Sunday School class and am also involved with a book club and the mahjong group.

What has surprised you most about Wilshire?

Wilshire's unwavering and clear commitment to its values in action is an inspiration. I was both surprised and encouraged to find a space with worship opportunities supporting those facing grief and loss.

What's something interesting most people would not know about you?

One of my projects in 2020 was listening to all the Beatles' albums in chronological order of their release. It was a fascinating and fun trip through music history!

The background of the entire page is a vibrant green. It is populated with numerous hands of various skin tones (tan, brown, black, pink) reaching upwards from the bottom and sides. Some hands are wearing different sleeves, such as a blue suit sleeve, a yellow plaid sleeve, and a purple sleeve with white polka dots. Scattered throughout the green field are several small, solid pink hearts.

WAYS TO SERVE IN DECEMBER

Scan the QR code for the details
from our mission partners
& sign up to serve.



How to Give

Your gifts are changing lives inside and outside our walls. Below are several methods you can use to contribute financially. Thanks for your generosity.

ONLINE. Set up a recurring or one-time gift charged to your debit or credit card or as an ACH from your checking account. Get started at wilshirebc.org/give.

REALM CONNECT APP. Easily make gifts and see past giving on your mobile device. Available at your device's app store. Find download links at wilshirebc.org/realms.

AUTOMATIC BANK PAY. Visit your bank's website and set up Wilshire as a payee. The bank will send the church a check.

MAIL. Send to Finance Director Lori Gooden's attention at Wilshire.

TEXT. Text WILSHIRE and a dollar amount (ex: WILSHIRE 50) to 73256.

DONATE STOCKS. Contact Lori to learn how to donate appreciated stocks.

FROM YOUR IRA. For those over 70.5 years old, tax-free IRA gifts offer a financial benefit and may reduce future tax burdens.



Scan QR code with your smartphone camera to make an electronic contribution.

At Wilshire, we use a one-fund approach to giving called the Unified Budget. Your gifts support the basic mission, ministry and operations of the church. Once the Unified Budget is fulfilled, gifts overflow into visionary aspects of our mission.

This Week

Sunday, Dec. 17

- Minister of Music Ballot Pickup, James Gallery, 9:15 a.m.
- Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.
- Worship, Sanctuary, 11 a.m.
- Minister of Music Ballot Pickup, James Gallery, noon
- Special Business Meeting, Sanctuary, 12:15 p.m.
- Adventurers to Courtyard Theater, 2 p.m.
- Blue Christmas Service, McIver Chapel, 4 p.m.
- Beer & Carols, Oak Highlands Brewery, 5 p.m.

Monday, Dec. 18

- New Song Christmas Luncheon, Community Hall, 11:30 a.m.
- Memorial Service: Phil Laquey, Sanctuary, 3 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 19

- Wilkinson Center Pantry Assistants, noon

Wednesday, Dec. 20

- Blood Drive, North Parking Lot, 10 a.m.

Thursday, Dec. 21

- WOW! Knitters Evening Group, Sara Tinsley Home, 6:30 p.m.

Friday, Dec. 22

- Memorial Service: Sheila Henning, McIver Chapel, 1 p.m.

Sunday, Dec. 24

- Christmas Eve Family Service, Sanctuary, 4 p.m.
- Christmas Eve Liturgical Service, Sanctuary, 11 p.m.

End of year need: \$525,884

It happens every year! It's a staple in our church; you could even say it literally holds together old and new, as great traditions do. Every year during the Youth Choir home concert after choir tour, they sing *Psalm 139*. It is at that moment generations of Wilshirites move to the chancel to join the youth. What a joy it was to see Charlene Law, Carolyn Murray and Lucy Kate Murray singing together, displaying family generations but also eyes that have seen so much happen in the life of our church. I saw preschoolers and children watching with sparkling eyes, wondering when it will be their turn to join, and high school seniors realizing next year they'll be walking up as alumni.

This weekend is a time of excitement as we welcome Ariel Merivil as our minister of music candidate. While worship is first and foremost for God, this Sunday will also blend the beauty of our music, past, present and future. While we may not all run up to the front to sing, most of us will run up to place our votes to secure a new future for our music ministry. That, my friends, is something worth singing about.

This year we have shared many notes of love and rejoicing. We have been generous with the tunes of our heart and the heart of the gospel. Tunes like Mary's: "God has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; God has brought down the mighty from their thrones." Or Mariam's: "In your unfailing love you will lead the people you have redeemed. In your strength you will guide

Watch this space each week as we decorate the tree to show our progress closing the gap between our 2023 budget and actual giving. For more about giving, visit wilshirebc.org/give or see page 19.



GOAL: \$967,326



\$441,442 GIVEN



them to your holy dwelling." And of course the tune of the psalmist which keeps on knitting us together through the years: "Lord, you have searched me and known me. You know everything I do. When I rise and lie down, you are with me through and through. Before a word is on my tongue, you know what I will say, your presence follows me day by day."

As pastor and residency alum John Jay Alvaro says, "Generosity is the engine of the universe. In the Trinitarian vision of God, generosity is an ever-flowing movement of grace and love, which extends out

to all of creation. Our own generosity is born out of an awareness that our lives are received as gifts from God. We are not self-made. Therefore, we hold our possessions lightly, so they might be turned loose for the help and healing of the world."

When you give to the Unified Budget, you make it possible for the tunes to keep on playing. We have \$525,884 left to give this year to complete our budget. I pray you'll take some time to consider what sacrificial gift you can make before Dec. 31.

—Timothy Peoples