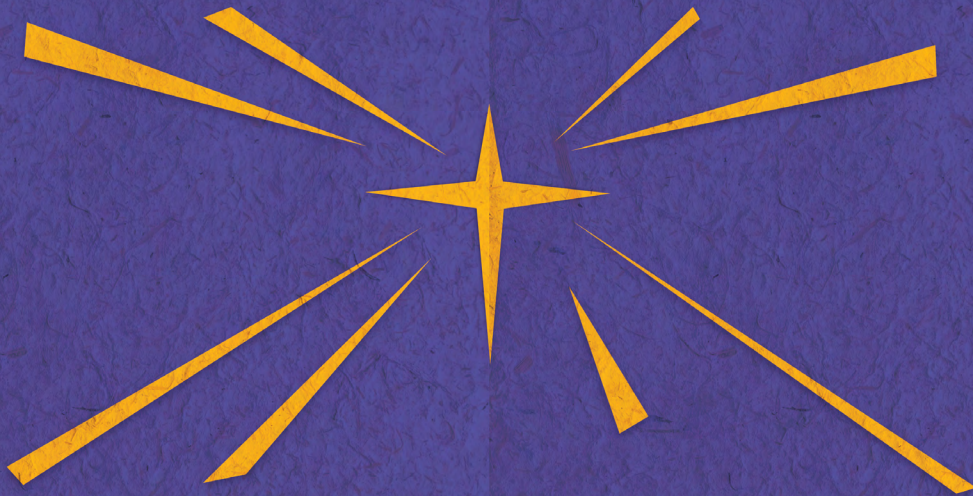
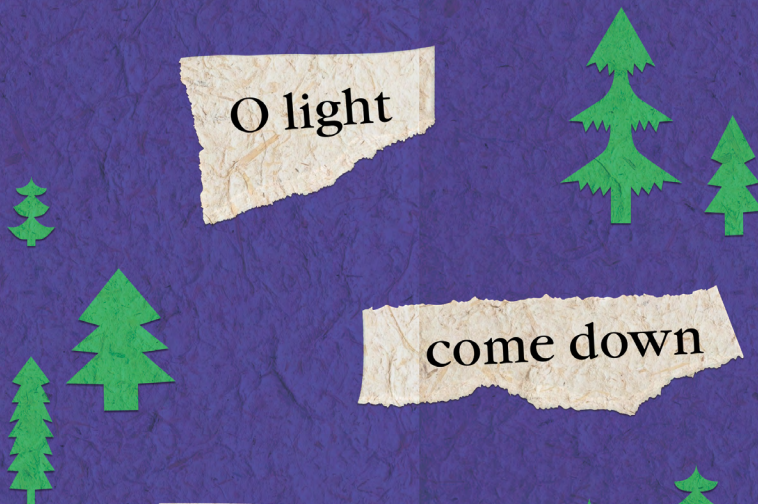




O light



come down

to earth



November 30, 2025 | First Sunday of Advent
Wilshire Baptist Church

Preparing for worship

Happy New Year! Well, sort of. Today marks the first day of the Christian year — the beginning of Advent. The liturgical calendar is the cycle that orients us to God. Year after year, we travel through sacred time, letting ancient stories speak something fresh for our modern faith, and we always begin with God coming down to dwell among us as a fellow human. And so here we are again at the threshold that brings us to where our journey with Christ started.

You might wonder: Why not start our year with Christmas, with Christ already here? Why begin with four weeks of watching and waiting? Barbara Brown Taylor, in her book *Learning to Walk in the Dark*, reminds us: “New life starts in the dark. Whether it is a seed in the ground, a baby in the womb, or Jesus in the tomb, it starts in the dark.” Advent is the season where we pay attention to that holy darkness. We open ourselves to longing, to hope and to the prayer that light will come and guide us.

This year, we’ll anchor our Advent reflections in Wendell Berry’s “Sabbath Poem: 1986, I.” In his words, we find ourselves standing quietly in the woods on what I imagine is a cold December morning. And if you’ve ever been somewhere cold and quiet like this, you might have found that the remnants of light and glimmers of life are, in fact, more profound and precious among bare branches and short days than in the easy bright fullness of summer.

This is why we start in the dark. This is why we must wait for Christ. So as the light around us dims and we anticipate new life, let us quiet our hearts and call out: “O light come down to earth.” —*Georgia McKee*

“Sabbath Poem: 1986, I”

By Wendell Berry

Slowly, slowly, they return
To the small woodland let alone:
Great trees, outspreading and upright,
Apostles of the living light.

Patient as stars, they build in air
Tier after tier a timbered choir,
Stout beams upholding weightless grace
Of song, a blessing on this place.

They stand in waiting all around,
Uprisings of their native ground,
Downcomings of the distant light;
They are the advent they await.

Receiving sun and giving shade,
Their life’s a benefaction made,
And is a benediction said
Over the living and the dead.

In fall their brightened leaves, released,
Fly down the wind, and we are pleased
To walk on radiance, amazed.
O light come down to earth, be praised!



Wilshire
BAPTIST CHURCH

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

Building a Community of Faith Shaped by the Spirit of Jesus Christ
Cooperative Baptist Fellowship | Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists

We acknowledge that this land where we gather once held the sacred voices of Indigenous peoples and bore the suffering of the enslaved.

On the cover: Advent art by Wilshire member Abi Hrbacek.

Sunday, November 30, 2025

11:00 a.m.

First Sunday of Advent

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome to Worshipers

Heather Mustain

Prelude

Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme
(*Sleepers Awake!*), BWV 645

Johann Sebastian Bach

Preparing for the Nativity

Alice Boyd, Ana Boyd, Annie Murray, Drew Murray, Caroline Skinner, Emily Skinner

Baptism — Abigail Gaines

Timothy Peoples

Choral Introit

Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light
Sanctuary Choir

Johann Sebastian Bach

Break forth, O beauteous heavenly light, and usher in the morning;
Ye shepherds, shrink not with affright, but hear the angel's warning.
This Child, now weak in infancy, our confidence and joy shall be,
The power of Satan breaking, our peace eternal making.

+Processional Song

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus
No. 83

HYFRYDOL

Lighting the Candle of Hope

Dewey and Sandra Watson

+A Moment of Hope

One: At the changing of the seasons, as we anticipate the birth of the Word made flesh,

All: Let us call our attention to hope.

One: This morning, we light the candle of the first Sunday in Advent, the candle of hope.
God, let the light of hope be called into our sight.

All: Help us to hope for our world, our community, and for hope to meet us where we are, illuminating our very lives.

One: May hope fall into the shadows of this world,

All: Into the shadows of injustice and uncertainty, the shadows of change and sorrow.

One: As the flame of the candle of hope dances and flickers, we are invited into this
dance of hope, of light, calling out,

All: O light come down to earth, be praised!

+All congregants are invited to stand in body or spirit.
Hearing devices are available in the Narthex and South Atrium.

+Response in Song*Prepare the Way, O Zion*

BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN

Pre - pare the way, O Zi - on, your Christ is draw - ing near!____

Let ev - ery hill and val - ley a lev - el way ap - pear.____

Greet One who comes in glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry.

O blest is Christ who came____ in God's most ho - ly name.____

Reading from the Hebrew Scriptures — Isaiah 2:1-5

Jenny Wolff

The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw
concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

In days to come
the mountain of the LORD's house
shall be established as the
highest of the mountains
and shall be raised above the hills;
all the nations shall stream to it.

Many peoples shall come and say,
"Come, let us go up to the
mountain of the LORD,
to the house of the God of Jacob,

that the LORD may teach us God's ways
and that we may walk in God's paths."
For out of Zion shall go forth instruction
and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.
God shall judge between the nations
and shall arbitrate for many peoples;
they shall beat their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation;
neither shall they learn war any more.
O house of Jacob,
come, let us walk
in the light of the LORD!

Offertory

Vom Himmel Hoch
(From Heaven Above to Earth I Come)

Johann Pachelbel

+Gospel Reading — John 1:1-14

Ann Meripolski

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it. There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all

might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

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!

+Congregational Song	<i>I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light</i>	HOUSTON
	No. 96	

Message	“Costly Hope”	Jordann McMahan
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Anthem	<i>Keep Your Lamps</i>	arr. Andre Thomas
	Sanctuary Choir	

Keep your lamps trimmed and burning, the time is drawing nigh.
Children, don't get weary 'til your work is done.
Christian, journey soon be over, the time is drawing nigh.
Keep your lamps trimmed and burning, the time is drawing nigh.

Prayers of the People	Charlie Fuller
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Silence
We pause in silence to reflect and to be attentive to the Spirit of God.

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 sins,
As we forgive those who sin against us;
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,
For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory forever. Amen.

+Congregational Song	<i>Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence</i>	PICARDY
	No. 81	

Sharing of Decisions

Jordann McMahan

Benediction

Jordann McMahan

Postlude

Improvisation on themes of the day

Jeff Brummel

The flowers today are given in honor of Georgia McKee
on the occasion of her ordination by her Lay Support Team.

Meet today's worship leaders

Ann Meripolski joined Wilshire in 2004 with her parents, Debbie and Mike Meripolski. Ann is a member of Odyssey Class, sings in Sanctuary Choir, participates in Faith in 3D and serves on the Lay Support Team for Pastoral Resident Jordann McMahan. She works as a Licensed Professional Counselor at Taylor Counseling Group.

Jenny Wolff joined Wilshire in 2004. She is a deacon, serves as deacon coordinator, chairs the Deacon Nominating Committee, attends Ithaca Class and serves on the Lay Support Team for Pastoral Resident Jordann McMahan. Jenny is lead triage nurse at Pediatric Associates of Dallas and serves as medical director for Dallas Pets Alive.

Sandra and Dewey Watson joined Wilshire in 2023 after moving to Dallas from Little Rock. They attend Compass Class and sing in New Song Community Choir, and Sandra volunteers with Friday Friends. Dewey practiced law for 40 years and continues to serve with the Arkansas Contractors Licensing Board. Sandra was a real estate agent in Little Rock and volunteered at Arkansas correctional facilities. The Watsons have three adult children and six grandchildren.



We're glad you're here. If you're a guest today and would like to let us know, please scan the QR code with your smartphone camera to access our online response card. You can also scan the code to make a financial contribution or submit a prayer request. Response cards and offering envelopes are available in the pew racks and can be placed in the offering plate or offering boxes.

Scripture quotations: New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition © 2021 National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America, used by permission, all rights reserved, adapted for inclusive language. Music reprinted/podcast/streamed with permission under One License #A-739361. All rights reserved. *Prepare the Way, O Zion* text ©1982 Frans Mikael Franzen, *Keep Your Lamps* © 2003 Hinshaw Music.

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 with phone extensions 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)
- Katie Murray, Minister of Pastoral Care and to Senior Adults (3129)

Finance

- Shaffon Alexander, Director of Finance (3131)

Food Services

- Haley Garcia, Food Service Director (3117)
- Luke Munion, Prep Cook
- Wilfredo Velasquez-Cruz, Steward

Hospitality and Facilities

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

Missions and Advocacy

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

Music and Worship

- Jeff Brummel, Associate Minister of Music/ Organist (3122)
- Carol Cabaniss, Music and Worship Coordinator (3106)
- Shana Gaines, Wilshire Winds Director (3163)
- Ralph Manuel, Handbell Coordinator (3161)
- Candy McComb, Children's Choir Coordinator (3124)
- Ariel Merivil, Minister of Music (3135)

Operations and Technology

- Rene Altamirano, Maintenance Technician
- Bryant Greer, Building Operations Manager (3146)
- Jim Tapley, Audio and Video Coordinator

Pathways to Ministry

- Debby Burton, Pathways to Ministry Assistant (3158)
- Charlie Fuller, Pathways to Ministry Director and Coach in Residence (3123)
- Amanda Hines, Pastoral Resident (3154)
- George Mason, Senior Pastor Emeritus and Pathways to Ministry Alumni Director (3133)
- Georgia McKee, Pastoral Resident (3152)
- Jordann McMahan, Pastoral Resident (3155)
- Maggie Morey, Pastoral Resident (3153)

Senior Pastor

- Chelsea Hopkins, Executive Assistant (3132)
- Timothy Peoples, Senior Pastor (3132)

Spiritual Formation

- Kelly Akins, Minister to Preschoolers (3139)
- Darren DeMent, Associate Pastor (3102)
- Julie Girards, Minister to Children (3104)
- Carole McClung, Spiritual Formation Ministry Assistant (3130)
- Katie Murray, Minister of Pastoral Care and to Senior Adults (3129)
- Barbara Peterson, Librarian (3114)

Tapestry



Wilshire
BAPTIST CHURCH

News & Announcements
November 30, 2025



Celebration of the Green next Sunday

Sunday, Dec. 7 | 6:30 p.m. | Sanctuary | Wilshire's choral and instrumental music groups will perform in the beauty of the decorated Sanctuary in this annual favorite event. A reception with cookies and cider will follow in Community Hall.

Poinsettia orders end today

Today's the deadline to order a Sanctuary poinsettia in honor or in memory of a loved one. Dedications will be listed in the Dec. 7 worship folder. Each plant costs \$14, and donors may take them home after Christmas Eve services. Order forms are available in the office, or you can order and pay at wilshirebc.org/poinsettias.

Georgia McKee ordination today

All are invited to an ordination service for Pastoral Resident Georgia McKee on Sunday, Nov. 30, at 2 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Georgia, a second-year resident, recently accepted the call to become associate pastor at Glencoe Union Church near Chicago.



Her last day at Wilshire will be Jan. 25. Georgia will lead Glencoe's youth and mission ministries while participating in worship leadership and preaching. Located in the village of Glencoe, just north of Chicago on the shore of Lake Michigan, Glencoe Union is a interdenominational church in the Protestant tradition.

Next Lunch & Learn: Dec. 3

All are invited to Community Hall at 11:30 a.m. the first and third Wednesdays every month for a buffet lunch (\$10) followed by Bible study. Associate Pastor Heather Mustain will teach Dec. 3. No RSVP needed; pay at the door.

Wilshire Welcome meets Dec. 14

Wilshire Welcome, a one-hour session to help guests and new members learn about the church, will meet Sunday, Dec. 14, at 9:45 a.m. in the Prayer Room near McIver Chapel. No RSVP needed; to learn more, contact Carolyn Murray at cmurray@wilshirebc.org.



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

Debby Burton retiring Dec. 31

Served as senior pastor's assistant for most of 28 years

DEBBY BURTON HAS ANNOUNCED her plans to retire after 28 years on the Wilshire staff. Her last day will be Dec. 31.

For most of her time at Wilshire, Debby served as executive assistant to the senior pastor, working with George Mason for 24 years and then with Timothy Peoples. In 2024 she scaled back to part-time and became assistant for Pathways to Ministry.

"Twenty-eight years ago, I entered 'a new beginning' on staff here at Wilshire. In 2026, I will enter 'a new beginning' called retirement," Debby said. "I have been in a season of discernment for over a year. I worked through the book *The Next Right Thing* — recommended by Geri McKenzie — and sought counsel from mentors to help me through this huge decision. This process finally led me to have the courage to move on without regret, realizing my work here is done."

Senior Pastor Timothy Peoples said, "Debby has poured her heart, her time and her unwavering faith into this church. Through seasons of joy and challenge, Debby has been a steady presence — guiding, encouraging and lifting others up with grace. Her dedication has shaped lives, strengthened families and deepened the spiritual foundation of our community. We celebrate not just the years she served, but the lasting impact of a life lived in faithful service. We will miss her competitiveness, puzzle-making strategies and cheerful attitude."

Debby came to Wilshire in 1997 from First Baptist Church of Garland, where she was secretary to the associate pastor. At Wilshire, Debby has at various times coordinated funerals, served as church clerk, managed the Columbarium, served as staff liaison to various committees and ministry teams, coordinated



outreach and care ministries, worked closely with deacons and coordinated Sunday morning office volunteers.

She was involved in the early days of the pastoral residency program and returned to that work as the Pathways program relaunched after a brief pause during

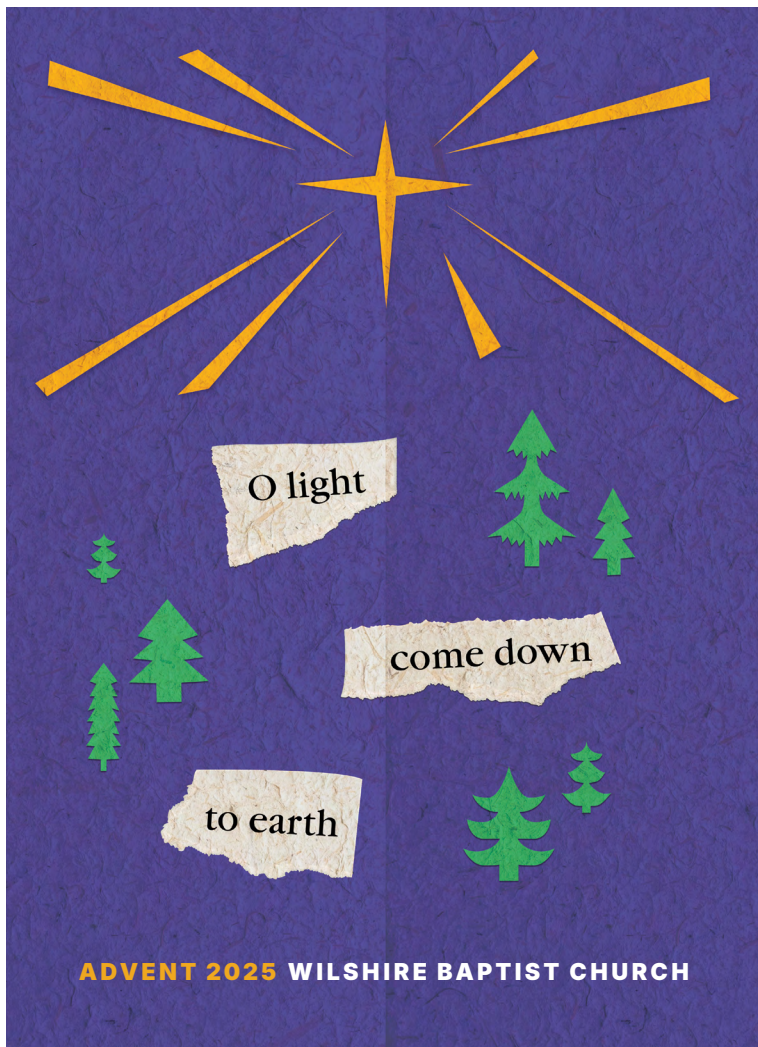
Wilshire's pastor transition.

Pathways Director Charlie Fuller said, "I've so appreciated Debby's work and support during our short season of working together. She brings deep responsibility to her work, important institutional memory, an eye for detail and has in so many ways, both personal and professional, been a thoughtful, compassionate supporter. Debby has been an incredible asset to me, to Pathways and to Wilshire!"

Debby and her husband, David, have been married since 1982. Their two sons, Andrew (known as Doo in Wilshire Student Ministry) and Josh, grew up at Wilshire.

Debby said in her next phase she plans to "turn off the alarm clock, change my wardrobe to sweats, work jigsaw puzzles, expand my library of books and discover new opportunities that interest me."

Of her time at Wilshire, Debby said: "The faces in the chairs have changed, but the mission of building a community of faith shaped by the Spirit of Jesus Christ has remained the same. I am grateful for my time in the chair I sat in and will forever remember the experience, joy and relationships I take with me."



During this liturgical season of expectant waiting, we will look to the themes of light and dark to guide us. In a time that feels so dark in our world, we will look to the Scriptures to inform how we, as people of faith, can re-frame both light and dark in tandem. What does it mean to await the coming of the Light of the World? What do light and dark have to say about hope, joy, peace and love? Join us as we hold a candle for one another and discover together. wilshirebc.org/advent

Sunday School series

Darren DeMent and Katie Murray will lead a Sunday School series for adults on the four Sundays of Advent at 9:45 a.m. in McIver Chapel. In the class, the Advent virtues of hope, peace, joy and love will be explored using the poetry of Wendell Berry, whose "Sabbath Poem: 1986, I" inspired our Advent theme.

Sign up kids to build Nativity scene

Elementary school kids are invited to help build the Sanctuary Nativity scene by carrying elements to the chancel at the start of worship. We'll begin Nov. 30 and build the scene week by week until it is complete at the 4 p.m. Christmas Eve service. Sign up at wilshirebc.org/nativity.

Adventurers outing this Tuesday

Tuesday, Dec. 2 | 3 p.m. | Join the Adventurers for an outing to Grapevine, the Christmas Capital of Texas. The group will enjoy the sights and sounds of the season as they wander Main Street for shopping, dining and fun. Cost: \$25 each for transportation by bus. We'll depart Wilshire at 3 p.m. and return at 9 p.m. Register at wilshirebc.org/events/grapevine. Adventurers is a fellowship group for anyone 60 and up.

Songwriter Vespers: Holiday Edition

Sunday, Dec. 14 | 4:30 p.m. | Choral Hall | Associate Pastor Darren DeMent and other musicians will explore the full range of holiday emotions through songs by Joni Mitchell, Tom Waits, Lyle Lovett and others. Part worship service and part coffeehouse concert, this won't be your typical church Christmas program.

One Starry Night

Friday, Dec. 19 | 6:30 p.m. | Bring the whole family and invite friends and neighbors to our free interactive Bethlehem Experience on Friday, Dec. 19, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Community Hall will be transformed into the village of Bethlehem, with shops, tradespeople, food and storytelling about the whispered birth of a special baby. This event is especially suited for families with children, but will be fun for all ages.

■ **Volunteers needed.** Learn more at wilshirebc.org/osn-volunteer or contact LeAnn Hampton at kitel@tx.rr.com.

Advent art show

Light is the common theme of the 16 works by artist Sandra Bowden on display through Jan. 4 in the South Lobby. Each piece in *Illuminations* is embellished with gold leafing, an adornment characteristic of many medieval texts. Visit whenever the building is open.

Giving Tree

Select a tag from the Giving Tree in James Gallery and fulfill a Christmas wish for a child or adult served by our Rental and Utility Assistance Program or a local mission partner. Scan your tag's QR code and we'll send you a due-date reminder.

■ We also have a **Virtual Giving Tree**. Find the link at wilshirebc.org/giving-tree.

Tree of Hope and Remembrance

Help decorate our 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. Ornaments and markers are provided at the tree.

Library Nativity sets

Stop by the Library during the holiday season to enjoy a display of Nativity sets from around the world.

Christmas Eve

Wednesday, Dec. 24

■ **4 p.m.** | Our family service is suitable for all ages.

■ **11 p.m.** | Our liturgical service includes celebration of the Lord's Supper.

Sunday, Dec. 28: No Sunday School; 11 a.m. worship only.



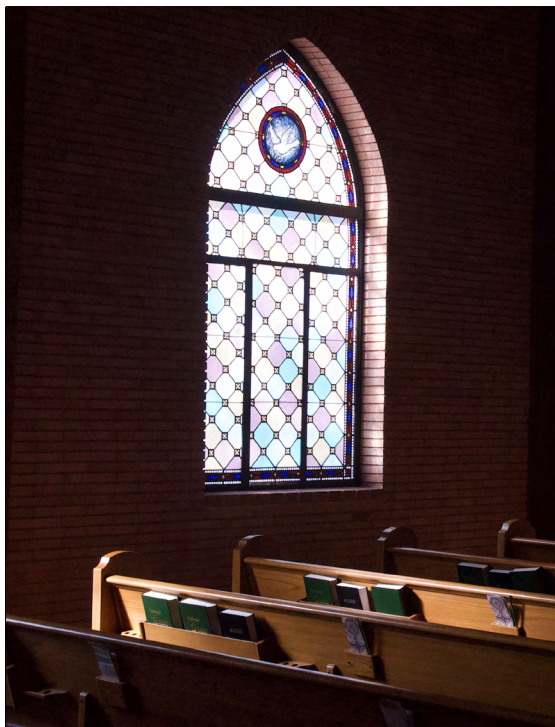
ONLINE BOOK FAIR

**Benefiting the Wilshire Library
Dec. 1-16**

Get some of your Christmas shopping done and help the Wilshire Library at the same time by shopping the Library's Online Book Fair from Dec. 1 to 16. The Library will receive 25% of all sales. More than 212,000 titles are available, from baby books to young adult. Scan the QR code or visit



wilshirebc.org/events/book-fair to start browsing.



9 a.m. Worship

Weekly | McIver Chapel

“This new service will provide a sacred space where we can step away from the busyness and noise of daily life to slow down, be still and cultivate a deeper connection with God.”

—Senior Pastor Timothy Peoples



Childcare available for preschoolers



Women of Wilshire

■ **Brown Bag Book Club** | Dec. 4 | Noon | 1205-L | *The Turtle House* by Amanda Churchill. Contact: Carolyn Murray (cmurray@wilshirebc.org)

■ **Tuesday Evening Book Club** | Dec. 9 | 6:30 p.m. | Parlor | The Dec. 9 meeting will include a cookie exchange and a special guest reviewing favorite Christmas books. Contact: Debby Burton (dburton@wilshirebc.org)

■ **Women of Wilshire's 2026 retreat** will be held Feb. 20–22, at the Prothro Retreat Center at Lake Texoma. Get away and find community, encouragement and time with God through worship, art, learning and fun. Register at wilshirebc.org/events/wow-retreat-2026.

Men's Book Club

Dec. 16 | 7 p.m. | Parlor | *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* by Gabriel García Márquez. Contact: Scott Spreier (swspreier@gmail.com) or Mike Meripolski (meripolski@att.net)

Monthly service opportunities

■ A Wilshire group will serve Dec. 19 at the **Vickery Meadow Youth Development Foundation Mobile Food Pantry**. Contact: Charlie Estee (cesteedallas@gmail.com)

■ Wilshire volunteers serve as food pantry assistants at the **Wilkinson Center** the third Tuesday afternoon each month. Contact: Cindy Estee (cesteedallas@aol.com)

■ Wilshire volunteers serve lunch at the **Stewpot** the second Thursday every month. Contact: David Cossum (dc@cossum.com)

WEDNESDAY NIGHT LIVE

Dec. 3: Vespers

Koinonia Café

5 p.m. | Community Hall | Buffet dinner with kid-friendly options. Cash/check/credit. Prices at wilshirebc.org/events/wnl. **Dec. 3:** Pork loin, sweet potatoes, Brussels sprouts, cornbread, broccoli cheddar soup, peach cobbler, oatmeal cookies, jello.

Preschool Music & Missions

6 p.m. | Age 3–Pre-K | Preschool choir plus fun activities and lessons focused on God's love and caring for others.

KidConnect

6 p.m. | K–Grade 5 | A rotation of activities to help kids learn how to love God and others, plus Kindergarten choir.

Watershed

6:30 p.m. | Grades 6–12 | Bible study and music in the Youth Center.

Sanctuary Choir

7 p.m. | Choral Hall | Wilshire's main adult choir rehearses weekly. New singers are always welcome, and there's no audition.



Vespers: Moravian love feast

6 p.m. | McIver Chapel | Join our pastoral residents for a Moravian love feast-themed Vespers. First held in Germany in 1727, love feasts evoke the agape meals of the early church and are often held at Christmas or other special occasions. The service will include music, Scripture and poetry. In keeping with love feast tradition, hot beverages and sweets will be served in the Parlor afterward.

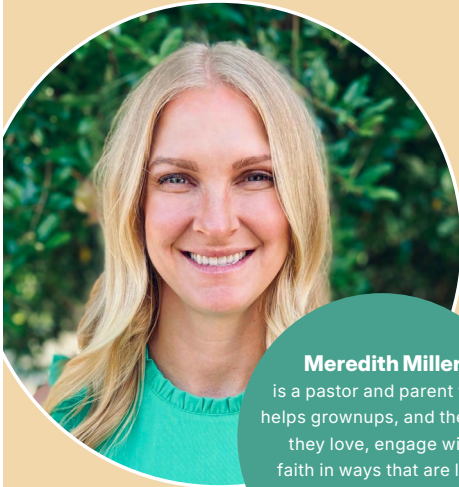
Dec. 10: Children's Pageant

6 p.m. | Sanctuary | Kindergarten, Pre-K and 3-Year-Old choirs will be in costume as they sing and act out the Nativity. Dec. 10 will be the final Wednesday Night Live before a holiday break.

Childcare is offered from 6 to 7:15 p.m. for infants to 2-year-olds with parents involved in church activities.

Meredith Miller

Author, speaker, expert on
faith formation in children



Meredith Miller

is a pastor and parent who helps grownups, and the kids they love, engage with faith in ways that are life-giving, fun and a fit for their real lives.

Sunday, Jan. 11

9:45 a.m.: Adult Sunday
School, McIver Chapel

Noon: Lunch Talk with Q&A,
Community Hall

REGISTER FOR LUNCH

[wilshirebc.org/events/
meredith-miller](http://wilshirebc.org/events/meredith-miller)



Parents Night Out on Dec. 12

On Friday, Dec. 12, Wilshire will offer free childcare (infants-grade 5) from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. while parents attend adult Sunday School Christmas parties or simply get some shopping done. Space is limited. Register at wilshirebc.org/events/pno-121225 by Dec. 7.

Stephen Minister training begins in January

Stephen Ministry is a Christian caregiving ministry in which trained lay people provide confidential, one-on-one support to those facing challenges such as grief, illness, divorce, job loss or family stress. Stephen Ministers are trained in listening, prayer and compassionate care and typically meet weekly with one care receiver at a time. The ministry expands our church's ability to offer support beyond what our ministerial staff can provide.

■ To inquire about receiving care, email stephenministry@wilshirebc.org or call our dedicated phone number, 214-452-3176.

■ A new Stephen Minister training class will begin in January. To learn more or apply, contact Linda Garner at 214-452-3151 or visit wilshirebc.org/stephen-ministry.

Columbarium prices to rise Jan. 1

Since its 2010 dedication, Wilshire's Columbarium has become the resting place for many Wilshire members and their loved ones. Over the years, we have kept prices steady, but with rising maintenance costs and the need to hire a new engraver, we are raising the price of niches and remembrance markers. Prices will change as follows: a single niche, now \$1,500, will cost \$1,750; a double niche, now \$3,000, will cost \$3,500; a remembrance marker, now \$500, will cost \$750. New prices will take effect Jan. 1. Act soon to purchase a niche or marker at the current price. Contact: Chelsea Hopkins (chopkins@wilshirebc.org)

This Week

Sunday, Nov. 30

- Art Exhibit: *Illuminations*, South Lobby, through Jan. 4
- Worship, McIver Chapel, 9 a.m.
- Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.
- Advent Sunday School Series, McIver Chapel, 9:45 a.m.
- Worship, Sanctuary, 11 a.m.
- Youth Choir Snack Lunch, Youth Center, noon
- Children's Choir Snack Lunch, 2223, noon
- Children's Choir, 12:30 p.m.
- Youth Choir, Choral Hall, 12:30 p.m.
- Carillon Ringers, Handbell Room, 1 p.m.
- Shekinah, Choral Hall, 1:30 p.m.
- Ordination Service for Georgia McKee, Sanctuary, 2 p.m. Reception follows.

Monday, Dec. 1

- One Starry Night Fittings, 1375, 9:30 a.m.
- Wilshire Winds, Choral Hall, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 2

- One Starry Night Fittings, 1375, 9:30 a.m.
- Stephen Ministry CE/Supervision, 1205-G & 1205-L, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Dec. 3

- One Starry Night Fittings, 1375, 9:30 a.m.
- New Song, Choral Hall, 9:30 a.m.
- Lunch & Learn, Community Hall, 11:30 a.m.
- Koinonia Café, Community Hall, 5 p.m.
- Vespers, McIver Chapel, 6 p.m.
- KidConnect, 6 p.m.
- Preschool Music & Missions, 6 p.m.
- WSM Watershed, Youth Center, 6:30 p.m.
- Sanctuary Choir, Choral Hall, 7 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 4

- One Starry Night Fittings, 1375, 9:30 a.m.
- WOW Brown Bag Book Club, 1205-L, noon
- Knit Unto Others, Parlor, 1:30 p.m.

Friday, Dec. 5

- MomCo, Community Hall, 9 a.m.
- One Starry Night Fittings, 1375, 9:30 a.m.

Saturday, Dec. 6

- One Starry Night Fittings, 1375, 9:30 a.m.
- Nova, Choral Hall, 10 a.m.

THANK YOU FOR GIVING

Your gifts are changing lives inside and outside our walls. Here are some ways to make a financial contribution to Wilshire.

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/realm.

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 Shaffon Alexander's attention at Wilshire.

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

DONATE STOCKS. Contact Shaffon 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 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.

End of year need: \$1,123,684

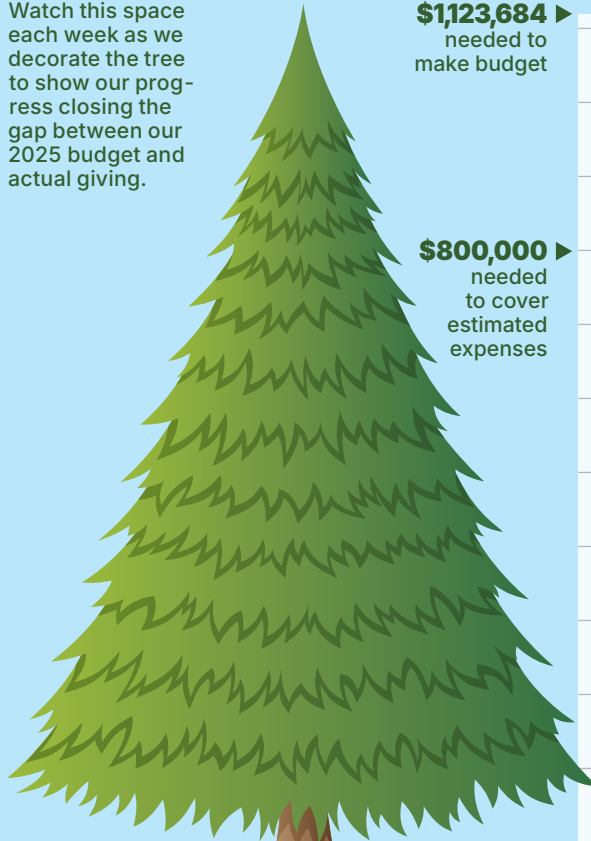
THIS YEAR, you will notice two figures on our Tree of Giving. One represents what we need to cover our estimated year-end expenses,* and the other reflects what we need to fully meet our budget. Last year some of you asked why both weren't shown. We are displaying both — and I want to share why each matters.

The estimated expense number is simply what we need to break even. The budget number — though higher — is also important. More than a decade ago, Wilshire adopted a Unified Budget approach that gathers all income and expenses for our ministry into one faithful picture. It allows us to work together as one body, supporting every ministry through the annual appeal rather than relying on separate fundraising. This frees our leaders and staff to focus on worship, care, teaching, service and outreach.

Our Unified Budget also relies on year-end surplus to fund essential projects and unexpected needs. We budget about \$120,000 annually for building contingencies, but this year our needs have far exceeded that — more than triple — due to water intrusion, elevator work, electrical upgrades and other improvements that come with an aging facility. We've been able to address these only because of your generosity in past surpluses.

Looking ahead, much work

Watch this space each week as we decorate the tree to show our progress closing the gap between our 2025 budget and actual giving.



remains to maintain our facilities and sustain the ministries that shape our shared life. Your year-end giving is vital to helping us meet these needs with confidence.

During this season of giving and gratitude, I invite you to hold Wilshire in your prayers. As you reflect on the numbers before you, may you also reflect on the ministry we share — the lives we touch, the worship we offer, the disciples we nurture and the community we serve. And may you consider how you can help us remain on solid footing for today and for the future God is leading us toward.

Thank you for the ways you give, care and serve. We are grateful for you.

Grace, Peace and Love,

—Tim

*Our expenses are lower than the overall Unified Budget because several areas came in under projections, including Support (about \$115,000, mainly due to lower-than-expected property insurance, security/alarm service and other costs), Personnel benefits (about \$55,000 due to retirement and group benefits being lower), Learn and Worship (about \$85,000), along with other smaller line items.