

Wesley United Methodist Church

Serving the Community with Faith & Love Since 1927!

Rev. Nizzi Santos Digan, Pastor & Spiritual Director

10:00 AM Sunday Worship

Third Sunday of Advent Gaudete (Rejoice) Sunday
December 14, 2025

At Wesley United Methodist Church, we foster a sanctuary culture by creating a safe environment where all feel welcomed, loved, accepted, valued, and affirmed for who they are, through intentional practices such as empathy, compassion, generosity, hospitality, and inclusion.

Please let an usher know if you have questions, need assistance, or have a concern about health or safety.



Please Stand in Body or in Spirit When You See the *

Prelude

Lo! How A Rose E'er Blooming

Ronna Davis, organ

Traditional German Melody
arr. by Mark Hayes

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung! Of Jesse's lineage coming as men of old have sung. It came, a Flower bright, amid the cold of winter, when half-spent was the night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it, the Rose I have in mind; with Mary we behold it, the virgin mother kind. To show God's love aright she bore to men a Savior, when half-spent was the night.

The Flower, whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air, dispels with glorious splendor the darkness everywhere. True man, yet very God, from sin and death He saves us and lightens every load.

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Kirby Shaw, Composer

O come Emanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here until the son of God appear.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

O come desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind; bid envy, strife and envy, strife and quarrels cease; and fill the world with heaven's peace.

Welcome

Pastor Nizzi

Centering

Wait for the Lord

Peter Hansen
Taizé Community

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.
Wait for the Lord: keep watch, take heart.

***Call to Worship**

One: John the Baptist asked, "Are you the One who is to come?"

ALL: And Jesus answered with hope, healing, and good news.

One: Jesus said, "The blind see, the lame walk, the prisoners are set free."

ALL: God's joy is breaking into the world!

One: In this season of waiting, we rejoice in God's saving work.

ALL: Our hearts are glad, for Christ is near. Come, Lord Jesus. Fill the world with joy and make us signs of Your grace! Amen.

***Opening Hymn/Processional** *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates*

UMH 213

Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates; behold, the King of glory waits;
the King of kings is drawing near; the Savior of the world is here!

Fling wide the portals of your heart; make it a temple, set apart
from earthly use for heaven's employ, adorned with prayer and love and joy.

Redeemer, come, with us abide; our hearts to thee we open wide;
let us thy inner presence feel; thy grace and love in us reveal.

Thy Holy Spirit lead us on until our glorious goal is won;
eternal praise, eternal fame be offered, Savior, to thy name!

***Praise Songs**

Me yi N'aye (I Will Praise Him) [Feel free to sing in either language]

Me yi n'aye, Me yi Nyamea' ye...

Me yi Nyamea' ye, Halleluyah, Halleluyah, Halleluyah ...

I will praise God, I will praise my God...

I will praise my God, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah...

Ayeyi Wura (You Own Our Praise) [Feel free to sing in either language]

A-ye-yi Wurae' ----A-ye-yi Wurae'

Ye yi W'aye Na ye Ma Wo so!

You own our praise! You own our praise!

We praise you, Lord, and we lift you high!

Opening Prayer

Holy God of Joy, we rejoice in the reality of who You are. We live within the joy of Your love for us. Our contentment comes and goes. Our happiness ebbs and flows. Our feelings depend upon our circumstances, our physical health, our brain chemistry. But our joy is deeply rooted in our identity as your beloved children.

Merciful God, we confess that we have often placed our hope in people and things that can't fulfill our every need. We have searched for peace in shallow places. We have mistaken joy for temporal pleasure and artificial exhilaration. We have put limits on the ways we love, excluding those who need our loving kindness the most. God, when we have lost our way, show us Yours.

Guide us to the hope in You that will renew our strength. Lead us to Your peace that transcends all understanding. Fill us with a joy we can only experience in your presence. Remind us that you have always loved us with an everlasting love, so that we may share that love with others. Amen.

(Moment of Silence for Personal Confession)

Assurance of Pardon

God Is Forgiveness

Debbie O'Driscoll

God is forgiveness. Dare to forgive and God will be with you.

God is forgiveness. Love and do not fear.

Advent Candle Liturgy

Ghanaian Association

Reader 1: In the midst of our waiting and longing for God to make the world right again, we cling to the truth that God has saved, God is saving, and God will save.

Reader 2: Today, we join our voices with the prophet Isaiah, who calls us to live in the joy of the truth of God's salvation.

ALL: We choose to believe that the day is coming when "the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away" (Isaiah 35:10).

Reader 3: We light this candle of joy as a sign of the Truth that sets us free to live in joy as we wait and work for the day when all creation will flourish together.

Light the third candle (pink) of the Advent wreath.

Reader 4: In Jesus, there is joy.

Musical Response

Light the Advent Candle v. 3

TFWS 2090

Light the Advent candle three, think of heavenly harmony
Angels singing "Peace on Earth," at the Blessed Savior's birth.

Candle, candle burning bright, shining in the cold winter night
Candle, candle burning bright Fill our hearts with Christmas light.

Time for the Child in Each of Us

Pastor Nizzi

Thank you, Jesus & Light of the World is Jesus

Call to Prayer

O Little Town of Bethlehem v.4

UMH 230

O Holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels, the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!

Prayers of the People

Pastor Nizzi

The Lord's Prayer

(You are invited to pray in the language of your choice to celebrate our diversity.)

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass 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.

Amen, amen, amen

*New Testament & Gospel Reading

James 5:7-8 - Courageous Patience

Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near.

Matthew 11:2-11 - Messengers from John the Baptist

When John the Baptist heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to Jesus, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

Anthem

Chancel Choir

Mary's Magnificat

Andrew Carter, composer

Softly a light is stealing, sweetly a maiden sings,
Ever wakeful, ever wistful.
Watching faithfully, thankfully, tenderly her King of kings.
My soul doth magnify, doth magnify the Lord.
And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
Mary her song to Jesus softly, serenely sings:
"I will love you, I will serve you,
May my lullaby glorify, magnify my King of kings."

Message

Joy for the Watchful Hearts

Rev. Nizzi Digan

The Offering & Offertory Music

Ghanaian Choir

Mo MMA Yenmbo se (Let Us Rejoice)

Nana Kofi Ampong Darkwa, composer

Let us rejoice, God lives always. Let us rejoice, He will always fight for us.
Let us rejoice, we will always be victorious. Alleluia! Praise and Victory.

Let us rejoice, Christ our King walks with us always.
Let us rejoice, He will grant us all our needs.
Let us rejoice, we will always be victorious. Alleluia! Praise and Victory.

*Advent Doxology

Tune: VENI EMMANUEL

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel, shall come to thee, O Israel.

*Prayer of Dedication

Pastor Nizzi

*Passing of Peace

Shalom

Mensah Essilfie, composer

God's peace be unto you,
We wish you Shalom!
The peace of God which transcends all
understanding be with you forevermore.

Announcements

*Closing Hymn/Recessional

UMH 263

When Jesus the Healer Passed Through Galilee

When Jesus the healer passed through Galilee, Heal us, heal us today!
the deaf came to hear and the blind came to see. Heal us, Lord Jesus!

A paralyzed man was let down through a roof. Heal us, heal us today!
His sins were forgiven, his walking the proof. Heal us, Lord Jesus!

The death of his daughter caused Jairus to weep. Heal us, heal us today!
the Lord took her hand, and he raised her from sleep. Heal us, Lord Jesus!

When blind Bartimaeus cried out to the Lord, Heal us, heal us today!
His faith made him whole and his sight was restored. Heal us, Lord Jesus!

The lepers were healed and the demons cast out. Heal us, heal us today!
A bent woman straightened to laugh and shout. Heal us, Lord Jesus!

The twelve were commissioned and sent out in twos, Heal us, heal us today!
to make the sick whole and to spread the good news. Heal us, Lord Jesus!

There's still so much sickness and suffering today. Heal us, heal us today!
We gather together for healing and pray: Heal us, Lord Jesus!

*Benediction

*Benediction Response

Congregation

May the grace and peace of Christ be with you, my friends.
Go and share the love of God, love that never ends.

Postlude

Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending

Ronna Davis, organ

Charles Callahan, composer

Worship Leaders: Gifty Bentum-Asante (liturgist), Tessa Burke (acolyte), David Dagle, Ronna Davis, Deborah O'Driscoll, Antonio Paredes, David Potts, Jennifer Quansah, Gary Robinson, Scott Shackett (acolyte), Michelle Williams (soloist), Chris Yeboah, Chancel Choir, Ghanaian Choir, Worship Tech Team

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This Week at Wesley

The church office is open Tuesday through Friday, 9:30 am – 3:30 pm.

Matt Crane will be in the office on Thursday, 10 am – 1 pm.

**Outside groups. Registration is required.*

Sunday, December 14, 2025

- 10:00 am Hybrid Worship
- 10:15 am Children's Sunday School
- 11:00 am Fellowship Time
- 11:30 am Chancel Choir Rehearsal
- 7:00 pm Sunday AA (Chapel)

Monday, December 15, 2025

- 5:30 pm Eye Glass Clinic
- 6:30 pm SPRC

Tuesday, December 16, 2025

Wednesday, December 17, 2025

- 12:00 pm Prayer Circle (MEL)
- 7:00 pm AA – BBSS (Chapel)
- 7:00 pm Wesley Ringers Rehearsal (BH)

Thursday, December 18, 2025

- 5:30 pm Fruits of Labor Basketball

Friday, December 19, 2025

- 5:30 pm Fruits of Labor Basketball

Saturday, December 20, 2025

- 9:30 am Ghanaian Choir Rehearsal (MEL)
- 10:00 am Carty Cupboard Food Pantry (til 11:30 am)

Sunday, December 21, 2025

- 10:00 am Hybrid Worship
- 10:15 am Children's Sunday School
- 11:00 am Fellowship Time
- 11:30 am Chancel Choir Rehearsal
- 7:00 pm Sunday AA (Chapel)