

**December 14, 2025**

““The Desert—Christmas Past and Future.”

*Speaker Susan Ackerman*

## Advent 3



# Warwick River Mennonite Church

A congregation of  
Mennonite Church USA

250 Lucas Creek Road, Newport News, VA 23602

757-874-0794

[warwickrivermc@gmail.com](mailto:warwickrivermc@gmail.com)

[www.warwickrivermennonite.org](http://www.warwickrivermennonite.org)

## WELCOME HOME TO Warwick River Mennonite Church

*In-person* Sunday School: 9:30-10:30 AM

*Virtual* Coffee Connect: 10 AM

*In-person and Virtual* Worship Service: 10:40 AM

*In-person* Coffee Connect follows Worship Service

**Recorded Sermons available at** [www.warwickrivermennonite.org](http://www.warwickrivermennonite.org)

*Church office hours: 10:30 AM – 4:30 PM Tuesday through Friday. If you have questions, concerns, or compliments you may contact any of the following people.*

### Leadership

Steve Wiebe-Johnson, Pastor  
MaryDawn Carrier, Congregation Chair  
Chris Miller, Elder & Council Co-Chair  
Sue Yoder, Outreach Chair  
Twila Blume, Member-At-Large  
Adam Carrier, Stewardship Chair

574-849-2021  
757-218-8137  
757-879-6659  
757-708-4036

### Serving Today

*Speaker: Susan Ackerman*

*Worship Leader: Twila Blume*

*Song Leader: Don Brunk*

*Reader: Rae Blanks*

*Zoom Host: Mackenzie Butler Shenk*

*About the visual display: Initially obscured, the star and its light will gradually be revealed, as each week we remove a part of its covering. This reminds us that God's presence is always with us, even when God feels hidden.*

### Warwick River Mennonite Church

## HOW TO CONNECT

**\*Worship Service \* Sunday School \* Meetings \***

**Computer:** [Click Here](#) to enter Zoom Meeting

\*MEETING ID: 846 7407 1811

\*PASSWORD: 809884

**Phone:** 929-205-6099

\*MEETING ID: 846 7407 1811

\*PASSWORD: 809884

*Questions: Don Brunk 610-787-0823*

## -- Gathering --

Words to Welcome

\*Hymn of Praise and Gathering

\*Call to worship (Based on Isaiah 55:1-13)

One: Come, all who hunger and thirst for more – God calls us to the feast!

Many: **We are weary exiles, longing for home,  
caught in a world that drains our hope.**

One: “Listen, so that you may live!  
My covenant is everlasting, my promise sure.”

Many: **Can joy reach us here, in this place of waiting?**

One: God’s vision is higher than the heavens,  
stretching beyond what we can see.

Many: ***The invitation is for all people,  
from the farthest reaches of the earth.***

One: The word of the Lord does not return empty –  
it brings forth life!

Many: **The mountains and the hills will burst into song,  
the trees of the field will clap their hands!**

All: ***You are the source of true joy, O God. You expand our vision,  
lifting our eyes beyond the moment, beyond despair, into  
amazement. We stand before you, ready to enter your story  
and be amazed.***

\*Candlelighting litany

One: We have been wandering in the dark, cold desert of  
grief and despair, and we feel heavy, dry and lifeless.

Many: **Come, Joy of the World. Come amaze us.**

All: ***May your joy water our thirsty souls, that we may  
become your fountains of joy,  
freely sharing your joy with the world.***

\*Hymn of Preparation

## -- Hearing God’s Word --

Scripture Readings: Isaiah 55:1-13; Psalm 42; Isaiah 40:1-5; John 4:13-14

Message: The Desert—Christmas Past and Future.

~ Speaker Susan Ackerman

## -- Responding to Worship --

\*Hymn of Response

\*Sermon/Message Response

Sharing of Blessings and Concerns

Offertory Prayer & Offertory

Sharing of Announcements

## -- Sending --

\*Song of Sending

\*Benediction

*Eat and drink, be filled with the abundant joy of the Lord,  
delighting as the Holy Spirit moves here among us.*

*May your heart be open, ready to receive God’s abundant love.*

*Watch and wonder, for signs of God’s promised One are  
everywhere.*

*Go in the knowledge that, at any moment,*

*God’s glory will break through our assumptions and amaze us with  
new possibilities.*

Go in Peace

## Prayer and Praise Requests

*“Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and  
in every way. The Lord be with all of you.”*

*~ 2 Thessalonians 3:16*

- ❖ We offer up prayers of thanksgiving for Pastor Steve Wiebe-Johnson and his wife, Dorothy. We are blessed that they have joined our Warwick River church family, and we are so thankful for this past year as we look forward to the coming new year.
- ❖ *Pray for everyone in our Church Family, that they may feel God’s presence in their Christmas celebrations.*
- ❖ **We pray for God’s healing touch upon Jan Dennis, Connie Saunders, and all those undergoing health challenges known and unknown to us.** May strength, courage, and hope be gained in the coming days and we pray God’s presence and peace, and ask for continued healing and restoration to body, mind, and spirit.
- ❖ Prayer & Bulletin updates, contact Church Elder Chris Miller, or Church Secretary Pat O’Connor (757-874-0794) ([warwickrivermc@gmail.com](mailto:warwickrivermc@gmail.com)).



*As WRMC enters the final three weeks of the 2025 budget year, we invite you to prayerfully consider tithing and giving as you are willing & able. Your faithfulness and generosity have carried us this far and with grateful hearts, and God's grace, we thank you for your continued interest & support of the ministry of Warwick River Mennonite Church.*

*Donate ([paypal.com](https://www.paypal.com))*

### Happy Birthday!

Dec 17	Dina Fentress	
Dec 18	Ronald Ziegler	Shawn McDaniel
Dec 21	Kathryn Baer	
Dec 22	Gabriella Davis	
Dec 23	Graham Wagner	
Dec 24	Micah Shenk	
Dec 27	Theresa Siebels	Delma Brenneman

## Upcoming Events

**WRMC OFFICE CLOSED: Dec. 24, 25, 26, 31, Jan 1**

*Always closed Mondays*

- ❖ *Today, Dec 14<sup>th</sup>* Today is the third Sunday of Advent  
9:30 Sunday School  
10:40 a.m. Sunday Worship Service
- ❖ *Today, Dec 14<sup>th</sup>* 4 p.m. Providence Mennonite Church \* Caroling Service \*
- ❖ *Mon., Dec 15<sup>th</sup>* 6:30pm WRC school Children's Christmas Program  
WRMC Sanctuary
- ❖ *Tues., Dec 16<sup>th</sup>* 4:00-6:00 p.m. WRMC Community Prayer Drop-in
- ❖ *Sun., Dec. 21<sup>st</sup>* Fellowship Christmas Meal follows Worship Service  
WRMC Council Meeting follows meal
- ❖ *Wed., Dec. 24<sup>th</sup>* 9:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service  
WRMC Sanctuary
- ❖ *Thurs., Dec. 25<sup>th</sup>* Merry Christmas (no services today)

## Announcements

**THE POINSETTIAS** that adorn the Sanctuary during the Christmas season are provided in remembrance and in honor of those who have filled our lives with love and joy. Thank you for participating and the dedications made. **Dear participants: remember to take your flower home on December 14<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup> ! Merry Christmas and blessings!**

**Budget 1/1/2025 through 12/31/2025: \$93,600.00**

**Dec. 7, 2025 REPORT \* 31 attended \***

\$ 1,421.00 Offertory 11/30/25

\$ 100.00 Received In Memory of Ernie Miller

\$ 1,521.00 Year-to-12/7/25 Offerings: 68,505.82 (-19,694.18)

**Thank you for your continued gifts to God and Church**



☀️ **You're Invited to Our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service** ☀️

December 24, 2025 at 9 p.m., in the Sanctuary of the  
Warwick River Mennonite Church

Join us for a peaceful and intimate evening as we gather by  
candlelight to celebrate the birth of our Savior.

We'll hear the scriptures that tell the Christmas story,  
sing cherished carols, and reflect together on the  
hope, peace, and joy Christ brings.

Bring your family and friends and  
step into a quiet, sacred moment—a time to rest, remember, and  
welcome the light of Christ  
this holy night.