

Welcome to

Woodridge Congregational Church
United Church of Christ

*An Open & Affirming Congregation and
A Caring & Welcoming Community*

Worship at 10:00 AM

December 22, 2024

woodridgechurchri.org

facebook.com/woodridgecongregational



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST
a just world for all

As a caring and welcoming community, using the Bible as a resource and the teachings of Jesus as our guide, we joyfully welcome everyone into our Christian community, regardless of race, ethnicity, class, age, mental status, family structure, physical or mental ability, religious background or theological perspective, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression. As Christian disciples, we invite all to share in the life, leadership, ministry, worship, sacraments, blessings and joys of our congregation.

** All who are able, please stand*



Prelude

Christ Child Lullaby Fr. R. Rankin, arr. K. Kolodner
Catherine E. White - Hammered Dulcimer

Gathering Music

Jingle Bells

James Lord Pierpont
Arr. Bob Quintiliani
Prime Time Chimers

Welcome & Church Life

Centering Music

Wait for the Lord
Taize

sung 3 x

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

Wait for the Lord, be strong, take heart!

Call to Worship: Advent Candle Lighting

One: In a weary and worn world, how do we begin again? Where do we start?

All: Let us begin with tenderness. Let us begin with our hearts on our sleeve. Let us begin from a place of vulnerability and hope. Let us begin with love.

One: Let us start with love. Today we light the candles of hope, peace, joy, and love.

All: May the warmth of these lights be our cornerstone. May the truth in these lights help us begin again. May it be so! Amen.

Opening Prayer (unison)

Holy God, the stories of Advent are stories many of us have heard before. We've arranged the nativity scenes. We've read the children's books. We've seen the movies. We've sung the songs. But as we come to worship this morning, we pray: help us begin again. Clear the distractions from our minds. Center us in this space. Move through the protective barriers we surround ourselves with and speak to us here and now. We are listening. We are hopeful. Amen.

Hymn:

O Come, All Ye Faithful

Pilgrim #132

Passing of the Peace

The Sacrament of Baptism

LITANY OF BAPTISM

Pastor: We are gathered to present this child to the church and to dedicate her to God. What can we affirm about her?

People: That she is a child of God and made in the image of God.

Pastor: As she grows in our congregation, how will she know that she is a child of God, made in God's image?

People: We will give her our love and include her in the life and ministries of this church.

Pastor: How will she learn of the Christian faith?

People: Through our teaching and the example of our lives. We will tell her about Abraham, the father of our faith; about Sarah, the mother of Isaac; about Moses and Miriam who led our ancestors out of bondage; about Ruth's faithfulness; about the Jewish hope for a messiah; about Mary and Joseph's openness to mystery; about our Savior, Jesus; and about the history of the Church as the people of God.

Pastor: And what, in turn, will we expect of her?

People: We look forward to sitting with her at the Lord's Table, sharing with her the costs and joys of discipleship, learning and growing with her in the Christian pilgrimage, and declaring with one voice our faith in God and God's son, Jesus.

QUESTIONS OF THE PARENTS AND GODPARENTS

QUESTIONS OF THE CONGREGATION

REPRESENTATIVE: And do you, the congregation of Woodridge Congregational Church, pledge to work toward creating and maintaining a nurturing and challenging Christian environment for this child?

People: We do, for she belongs to us as well.

REPRESENTATIVE: Then, may God be with us.

People: God help us. Amen.

THE PRAYER AND ACT OF BAPTISM

RENEWAL OF THE BAPTISMAL COVENANT

Pastor: May the Eternal God, who in Christ has given us new birth by water and the Spirit, now give us the grace we need to fulfill what we have promised.

People: Let us be faithful to our Savior Christ, for ever and ever.

CONGREGATIONAL WELCOME

Representative: Now, with joyful hearts let us welcome the newest member of the body of Christ:

People: We rejoice in God's empowering love, freely given to each and all. We welcome you, Persephone Grace, newly baptized, into the loving embrace of our church, which is called the Body of Christ. We promise to pray for you, to seek the depths of faith with you, to support you, and to love you. We covenant with you to love God with all our hearts, minds, souls, and strength, and our neighbors as ourselves. In this way we shall learn from one another, grow stronger, and more often be faithful to God as servants to all people. So be it!

Sending Hymn:

Child of Blessing, Child of Promise
(Children may leave for Sunday School)

NCH #325

Scripture:

Luke 1:39-45(NRSV)

³⁹In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴²and exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.”

Scripture:

Luke 1:46b-55(NRSV)

⁴⁶And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ⁴⁸for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; ⁴⁹for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. ⁵⁰His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. ⁵¹He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. ⁵²He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; ⁵³he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. ⁵⁴He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, ⁵⁵according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

Sermon

Rev. Aidan Myers Kelley

Hymn:

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Pilgrim # 134

Prayer Concerns and Celebrations – Pastoral Prayer

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 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, for ever and ever. Amen.

Offertory

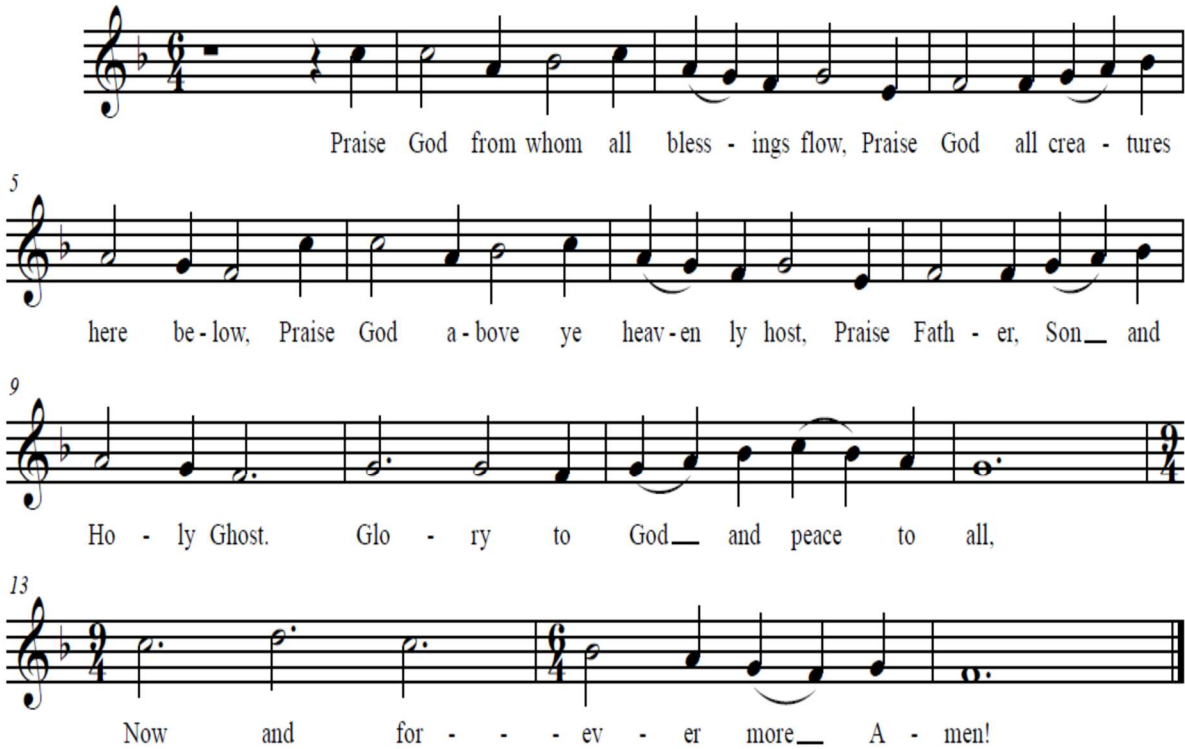
The First Noel Canon

Woodridge Choir

Doxology

Advent Doxology

Sussex Carol - English



Prayer of Dedication (unison)

May these gifts glorify your name, Holy One. May the ministries we support bring justice and peace to your world. May they offer faith and hope to your people. In grateful joy, we pray. Amen.

Hymn:

Canticle of the Turning

arr. R. Cooney
Irish Traditional

verse 1 My - soul cries out with a joy - ful shout, that the
verse 2 I am small, my God, my all, you -
verse 3 halls of power to the for - tress tower, not a
verse 4 na - tions rage from age to age, we re -

God of my heart is great, and my spir-it sings of the won - drous things that you
work great things in me, and your mer-cy will last from the depths of the past to the
stone will be left on stone. Let the king be - ware for your jus - tice tears ev - ery
mem - ber who holds us fast, God's mer - cy - must de - liv - er us from the

bring to the ones who wait. You fixed your sight on your ser - vant's plight, and my
end of the age to be. Your ver - y name puts the proud to shame, and to
ty - rant - from his throne. The hun - gry poor shall weep no more, for the
con - quer - or's crush - ing grasp. This sav - ing word that our fore - bears heard is the

weak - ness you did not spurn, so from east to west shall my name be blest could the
those who would for you yearn, you will show your might, put the strong to flight, for the
food they can nev - er earn, there are tab - les spread ev - 'ry mouth be - fed, for the
prom - ise which hold us bound, til the spear and rod can be crushed by - God, who is

world be a - bout to turn. My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the
world is a - bout to turn. My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the
world is a - bout to turn. My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the
turn - ing the world a - round. My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the

fires of your jus - tice burn. Wipe a - way all tears, for the dawn draws near and the
fires of your jus - tice burn. Wipe a - way all tears, for the dawn draws near and the
fires of your jus - tice burn. Wipe a - way all tears, for the dawn draws near and the
fires of your jus - tice burn. Wipe a - way all tears, for the dawn draws near and the

world is a - bout to - turn. Though
world is a - bout to - turn. From the
world is a - bout to - turn. Though the
world is a - bout to - turn.

Benediction

Benediction Response

Put Love Into Each Other's Hands
Based upon an Irish Melody

Put love in - to each oth - er's hands, and like a trea - sure

hold it. Pro - tect it like a can - dle flame, with

ten - der - ness en - fold it. Put love in - to each oth - er's hands, with

ten - der - ness en - fold it.

Postlude

Good King Wencesios
Catherine E. White – hammered dulcimer

arr. J. Weinberg

Poem by Mary Morra
Luke 1:26–38

Hark! O Herald Angel!
You carry a message,
A blessing from God,
A hint of a plan.

I am frightened

Hark! Oh Herald Angel
You sing of a baby
A light for the world
You bid my consent.

I am a virgin

Hark, O Herald Angel!
His will shall be mine
Let spirit enfold me,
His grace be my life!

My story begins

Announcements

Thank you for your continuing donations of non-perishable food items to the Interfaith Food Pantry – in the narthex basket or the box outside the Jackson Road office entrance. Please consider bringing in items that will help people stay warm and supply nutrition such as: Hot soup in packets (Lipton), Instant hot cereal packets in a box, Oatmeal, Instant potatoes, Tea, Hot Chocolate, Liquid boxed milk, Powdered milk, and Peanut butter.

A Final Thing From the Market – There are many plastic containers in the kitchen and also a lovely blue glass cake plate (carefully tucked away) that can be picked up the next time you are in church.

The MAE Organization Ministry – We are continuing to accept monetary donations on 12/15/24 and 12/22/24. As mentioned previously, you are invited to select a numbered angel off the tree in the Narthex and give your donation to, Deb DiChiara, Rick or Stacey Cunningham, Tricia Pardini, or Barbara Stifano who will be in the Narthex following service. For those who donated last week, please see Barbara Stifano so she can obtain your name for the amount you gave for your tax purposes.

Christmas Eve Service with Pageant — 12/24 @ 5 PM

Join us on Christmas Eve as we hear the story of Christ's birth through a beautiful, narratively driven poem at our 5 PM Christmas Eve service. We will welcome baby Jesus with song, with story, with prayer, and with candlelight in a meaningful service for all ages.

The Grief Support Group Meets Thursday afternoons, 2:00 - 3:30 pm in the Conference Room of the church. Access is via the Jackson Road entrance. This gathering is for those who have experienced the loss of a loved one. For more information, please contact the facilitator, Rev. Burton Bagby-Grose at bbagbygrose@vnacarenewengland.org

Quilty Pleasures Quilt Guild Meets on the 2nd & 4th Wednesday of each month, 6-9pm. All experiences WELCOME. Cost \$5.00 to attend applied to annual dues. For questions contact: RPloettner@gmail.com

Worship Ministers for Today's Service

Liturgist: Mike Corey

Ushers: Grant Southard, Marsh Southard,
Robert Cole, Marianna Sarty

Stewards: Marsha Southard, Grant Southard,
Ellen Hunt, Bob Cole

For the month of December, refreshment is
supplied by the Service Committee and Executive Board

Our Staff:

Rev. Aidan Myers Kelley, Pastor
aidan@woodridgechurchri.org

Eric Van Dervort, Music Minister
ewvandervort1@gmail.com

Sandy Nolan, Organist
sanolan00@gmail.com

Barbara Stifano, Administrative Assistant
Office hours 9am – 1pm M-F woodridgechurch@verizon.net
401-942-0662 or 401-942-0654

Catherine E. White plays a hammered dulcimer built by Jerry Read Smith in 2018. She studied with Jon Weinberg for five years until his death in March 2020.

Since then, Catherine has continued her studies with Mary Lynn Michal and Ken Kolodner. Catherine also performs with the Gaspee Celtic Jam at venues in Pawtuxet Village.

*"Jingle Bells", written by James Lord Pierpont
at the Simpson Tavern in Medford, Massachusetts in 1850.*