

Welcome to

Woodridge Congregational Church
United Church of Christ



An Open & Affirming Congregation and
A Caring & Welcoming Community

Worship at 10:00 AM

December 8, 2024

woodridgechurchri.org

facebook.com/woodridgecongregational



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

Gathering

Welcome & Church Life

Centering Music

Wait for the Lord
Taize

sung 3 x

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

5
Wait for the Lord, be strong, take heart!

Call to Worship and Advent Candle Lighting

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

All: Let us begin together. Let us begin arm in arm. Let us begin by holding each other up, instead of tearing each other down. Let us begin with words of peace.

One: Let us begin with peace. Today we light the candles of hope and peace.

All: May these lights remind us of what could be. May these lights mark a new beginning. May peace flow like a river, and may it start with us. Arm in arm, hand in hand, side by side. May we begin again. Amen.

Opening Prayer (unison)

Holy God, the words of this world whip around us like a mighty wind. We are caught up in news reports, in text messages, in emails and notifications. We are drowning in updates from the media, caught off guard by the constant hum of it all. But this morning we remember: you too are speaking. Still the voices around us. Calm our minds and center our hearts so that we can hear your words above the wind. We are leaning closer. We are beginning again. Speak to us, as only you can. Amen

*Hymn

Come Forth, O Love Divine

NCH #289

Scripture:

Malachi 3:1-4(NRSV)

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. ²But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap; ³he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. ⁴Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

Passing of the Peace

Children’s Message

*Sending Hymn:

Go, My Children, with My Blessing (verse 1)
(Children may leave for Sunday School)

NCH #82

Scripture:

Luke 3:1-6 (NRSV)

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, ²during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, ⁴as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, “The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. ⁵Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth; ⁶and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’”

Sermon

Rev. Aidan Myers Kelley

*Hymn

Prepare the Way of the Lord
taize for advent

sung 3 x

Pre - pare the way of the Lord. Pre-prepare the way of the Lord. And
all peo - ple will see the sal - va - tion of our God___ Pre

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.

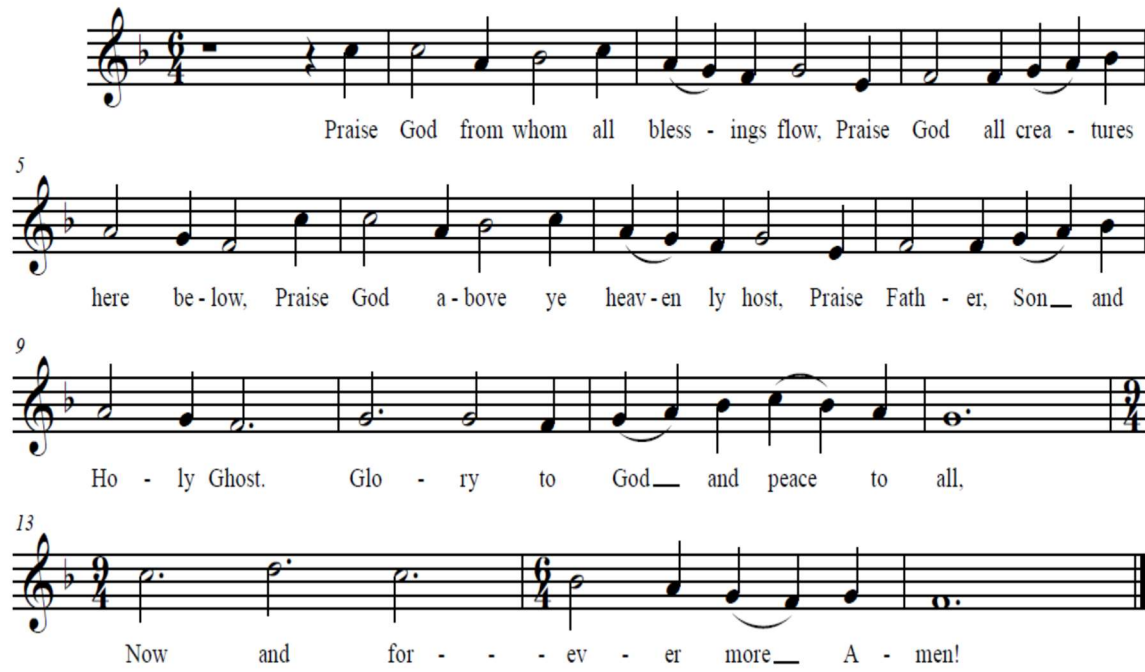
Offertory

Were You There on That Christmas Night

N. Sleeth
Woodridge Choir

*Doxology

Advent Doxology
Sussex Carol - English



Praise God from whom all bless - ings flow, Praise God all crea - tures
5 here be - low, Praise God a - bove ye heav - en ly host, Praise Fath - er, Son__ and
9 Ho - ly Ghost. Glo - ry to God__ and peace to all,
13 Now and for - - - ev - er more__ A - men!

Prayer of Dedication (unison prayer)

As you rescued your people of old, rescue us over and over again, Mighty One. Purify our lives this day and bless the gifts we bring before you now. Through our offering, may your love and justice be found. Amen.

*Hymn

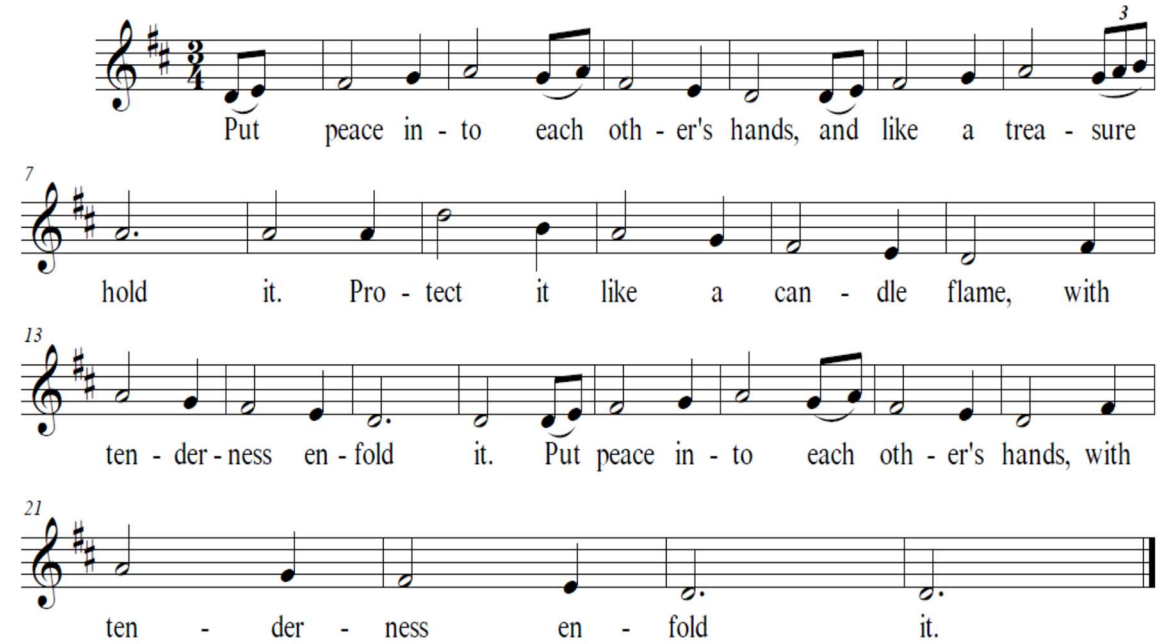
Angels from the Realms of Glory

NCH #126

Benediction

Benediction Response

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



Put peace in - to each oth - er's hands, and like a trea - sure
7 hold it. Pro - tect it like a can - dle flame, with
13 ten - der - ness en - fold it. Put peace in - to each oth - er's hands, with
21 ten - der - ness en - fold it.

Postlude

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. **This year in leu of Thanksgiving Baskets we are planning to do a bigger food distribution at the Food Pantry in December.** Please consider bringing in items that folks could use as part of their Christmas celebration such as boxed potatoes, canned veggies, canned yams, cranberry sauce, stuffing mix, boxed breads (banana, pumpkin, coffee cake) cake and brownie mixes. Boxed pie crust and canned filling.

December Faith and Film - Sunday, December 15th @ 11 AM : “National Lampoon’s Christmas Vacation”

Join your friends from Woodridge as we explore aspects of our faith through the storytelling of film. This month, we’ll lean into the holiday spirit and come together after worship on Sunday, December 15th to discuss the 1989 movie “National Lampoon Christmas Vacation”. We all hope for the perfect Christmas, but as Clark Griswold learns, Christmas can be messy. Bring your favorite Christmas ornament (or a picture to share) and we’ll tell some holiday stories together.

Blue Christmas Service — Tuesday, December 17th @ 7 PM

The holiday season can often be a difficult and somber one for many of us. Join us for a quiet service of light and reflection as we seek hope in the midst of loss, pain, or uncertainty. If you are feeling blue this Christmas season, you are not alone.

2024 Christmas Pageant — Christmas Eve

Did you miss your chance to play an angel or shepherd in your childhood pageant? This year, you’ll get your chance to enter the Christmas story! The CE Team is organizing an intergenerational “pageant” which will invite you to participate as much (or as little!) as you’d like. This year, we’ll tell 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.

We are still looking for people to help with the Livestream Team! If you are interested in sitting in the balcony during worship once a month and would like to learn how to operate the camera and computer and generate our livestream of the worship service, please contact Bob Ryan (bobby.ryan@verizon.net) or see him at church) or Jay Bombardier (firebombjr@gmail.com) or see him at church). Thank you very much!

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 has resumed meeting on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month 6-9pm. All experiences WELCOME. For questions contact: RPloettner@Gmail.com.

Worship Ministers for Today’s Service

Liturgist: Carmen Steinbrecher

Ushers: Carmen Steinbrecher, Sharon Albert,
Les Steinbrecher, Rebecca Rotondo

Stewards: Courtney Lombardi, Carmen Steinbrecher,
Les Steinbrecher, Rebecca Rotondo

The flowers this Sunday are given by
Joe DiPietro, who wishes his Woodridge family
a very Merry Christmas.

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