

Welcome to

Woodridge Congregational Church
United Church of Christ

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

Worship at 10:00 AM

December 29, 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 Music

Welcome & Church Life

Merry Christmas! Good morning and welcome to the worship of God here at Woodridge Congregational, United Church of Christ. We are an Open and Affirming Congregation which means that we welcome you, in this fullness of who you are, which means that no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are very welcome here. You are all invited to join us for a time of fellowship and refreshment following worship in Fellowship Hall for coffee hour.

(Announcements?)

Pastor Aidan is on vacation this Sunday, so we are joining together in a special service of lessons and carols on this First Sunday after Christmas. So let us center down into our worship as we hear and sing of the gift of Christ.

Call to Worship

Please join me in our call to worship:

One: God was born into our world this Christmas.

All: God is in our joy.

One: God is in this room.

All: We have reason to celebrate.

One: We have a reason to sing.

All: Thanks be to God for the bright hope of this day.

Opening Prayer (unison)

Let us continue with our opening prayer:

God of angel choruses and contagious laughter, we know that you speak to us in the quiet. We know that when we bow our heads and fall to our knees, you are there, hovering close, calling our names. We also trust that when we throw our heads back in laughter, when we dance and clap with joy, when we sing with gratitude, that even there, you are speaking. So on this Sunday morning we pray: open our ears and hearts to hear what it is that you are saying. Meet us in this joy. Meet us in this delight. Meet us in the hope of this Christmas season and reveal the wisdom we need to hear today. With hearts full of gratitude, we pray. Amen.

Passing of the Peace

Jesus offers us his peace which surpasses all understanding. May the peace of Christ be with you. Let us pass the peace of Christ.

*Hymn: Joy to the World Pilgrim #130

First Reading: Genesis 1:1-5,14-18 Bob Q.

When God began to create the heavens and the earth, the earth was complete chaos, and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. And God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

And God said, "Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth." And it was so. God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good.

Hymn: It Came Upon the Midnight Clear Pilgrim #129

Second Reading: Micah 5:2-5a Carmen S.

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore, he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth, and he shall be the one of peace.

Hymn: O Little Town of Bethlehem Pilgrim # 134

Third Reading: Luke 1:26-35,38 Tricia P.

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God.

Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Hymn: Hark! The Herald Angels Sing Pilgrim # 120

Fourth Reading: Matthew 1:18-25 Carol Kinoian

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant

from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

"Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

Hymn: Silent Night, Holy Night Pilgrim # 138

Fifth Reading: Luke 2:8-20 Barbara Gloria

Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

Hymn: What Child is This Pilgrim #140

Sixth Reading: *The Birds of Bethlehem* by Tomie de Paola
read by Eric Van Dervort

Hymn: The First Nowell Pilgrim # 141

Seventh Reading:

John 1:1-14

Margaret Wintle

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.

Hymn: Lo, How a Rose E're Blooming Pilgrim #131

Prayer Concerns and Celebrations

Also if desired, wishes and hopes for the New Year

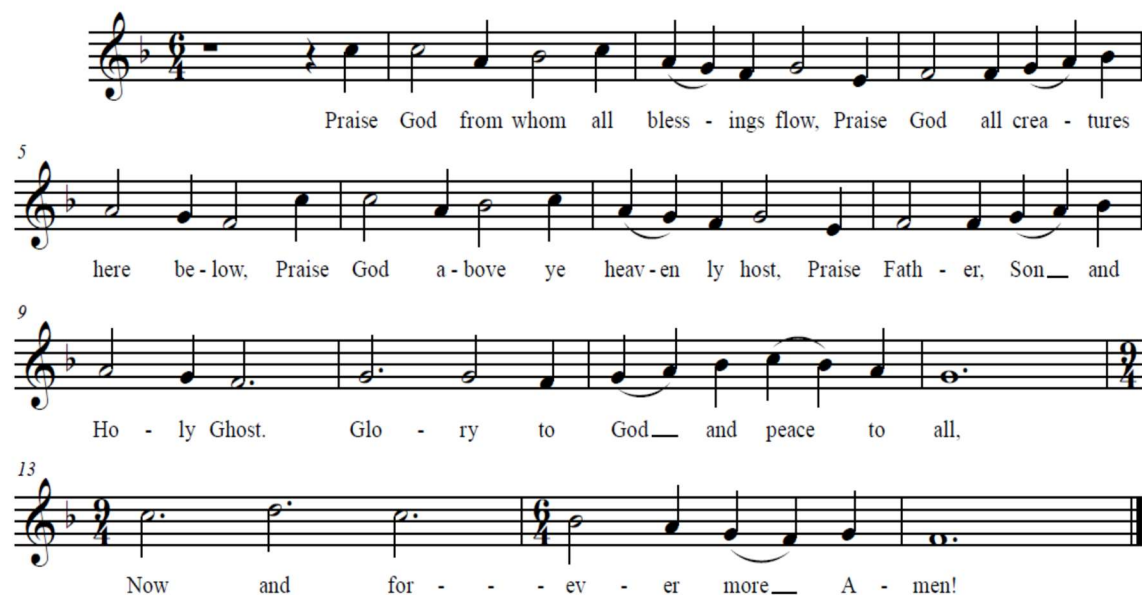
Lord's Prayer

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

* 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)

Gracious God, collect these offerings so that the blessings and favor you have given to us may be shared among our neighbors with trust, hope, and love. Amen.

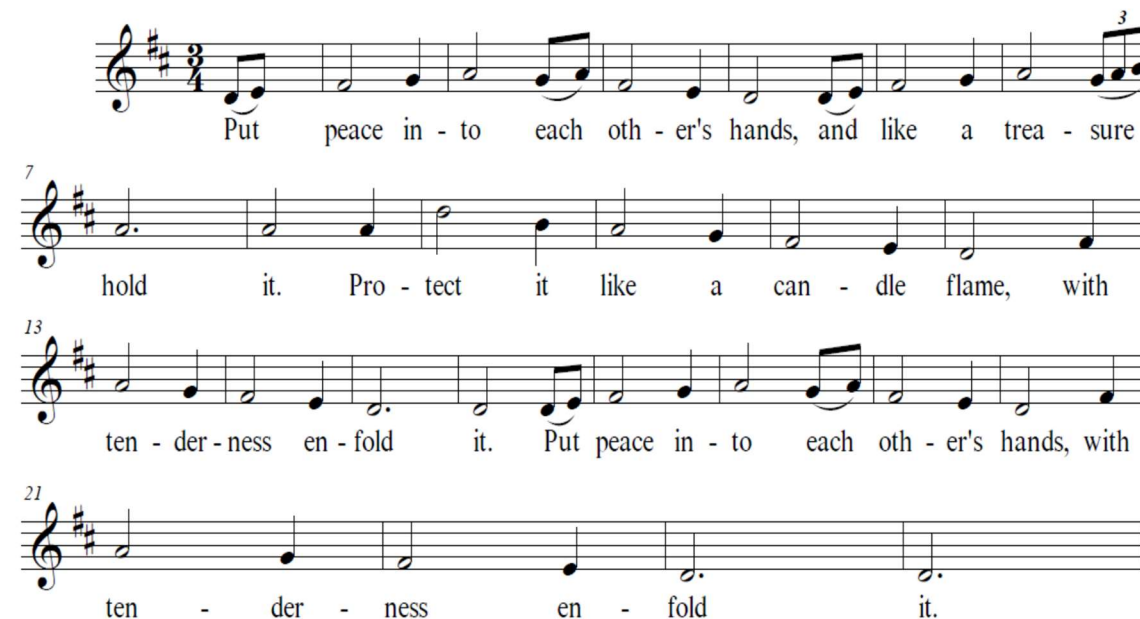
*Hymn: Go Tell It on the Mountain Pilgrim #488

Benediction

There is good news: Jesus Christ is born! So as you leave this place, may you be quick to laugh and quick to hope. May you look for reasons to be grateful. May you not hesitate to join in the song. May you extend a hand to your neighbor, and find God in every moment of joy. For unto you a child is born. So go in peace trusting in that promise. Go in peace, and go with joy. Amen.

*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

Worship Ministers for Today's Service

Liturgist: Eric Van DerVort

Ushers: Nancy Quintiliani, Martha Ryan,
Lori-Jo Wahl, Lenny Wahl

Stewards: Gale MacDonald, Dianne Cavanaugh,
Eileen Phaneuf, Carol Kinoian

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