

*Welcome to*

Woodridge Congregational Church  
United Church of Christ



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

Worship at 10:00 AM

December 1, 2024

[woodridgechurchri.org](http://woodridgechurchri.org)

[facebook.com/woodridgecongregational](https://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

O come, O come, Emmanuel with  
Born That We May Have Life

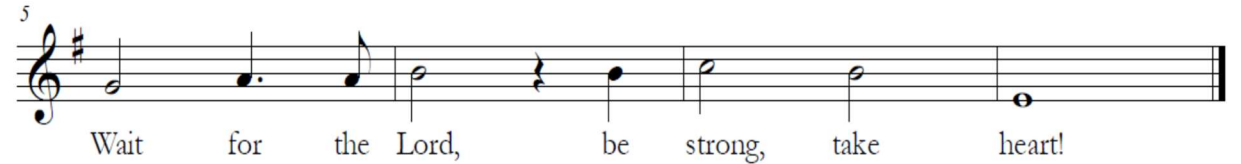
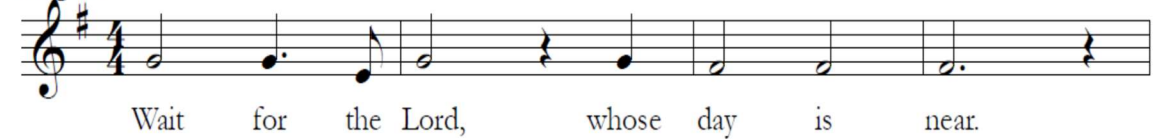
arranged by Carol Tornquist  
Sandy Nolan - piano

Welcome & Church Life

Centering Music

Wait for the Lord  
Taize

sung 3 x



Call to Worship

- One: In a weary and worn world, how do we begin again? Where do we start?
- All: Let us begin with the good news! Let us begin by trusting that we are a blessing, loved by a gracious God. Let us begin with music and singing! Let us begin with warmth and welcome. Let us begin with hope.**
- One: Let us begin with hope. Today we light the candle of hope to shine a light in a worn and weary world.
- All: May this be our foundation. May this be our fresh start. May this be our new beginning. May hope flow from here. Amen!**

Prayer of Confession (unison)

**Affirming God, your first words to creation were words of love. You looked at this earth and said, “It is good.” You spoke affirmations through the prophets. You spoke blessings over Mary. You spoke belonging through Christ. At every turn, you have reminded us that we are a blessing, made in your image, held in your love. Forgive us for forgetting this truth. Forgive us for measuring our worth by society’s measuring stick instead of yours. We believe. Help our unbelief. In Christ’s name we pray, amen.**

Assurance of Pardon

\*Hymn

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

NCH #116

Scripture:

Psalms 25: 1-10(NRSV)

<sup>1</sup>To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul. <sup>2</sup>O my God, in you I trust; do not let me be put to shame; do not let my enemies exult over me. <sup>3</sup>Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame; let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous. <sup>4</sup>Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths. <sup>5</sup>Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long. <sup>6</sup>Be mindful of your mercy, O Lord, and of your steadfast love, for they have been from of old. <sup>7</sup>Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your steadfast love remember me, for your goodness’ sake, O Lord! <sup>8</sup>Good and upright is the Lord; therefore, he instructs sinners in the way. <sup>9</sup>He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way. <sup>10</sup>All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness, for those who keep his covenant and his decrees.

Passing of the Peace

Children’s Message

Scripture:

Jeremiah 33: 14-16(NRSV)

<sup>14</sup>The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. <sup>15</sup>In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. <sup>16</sup>In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: “The Lord is our righteousness.”

Meditation

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- pare 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

Christmas Communion Song

S.N. Callaway  
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)

**We thank you, God, for the joy we feel this day. We are blessed by this community of love, this sanctuary of acceptance. We place our trust in you, knowing that you care for us. With deep gratitude for all you provide to us, we offer our gifts to you. Amen.**

\*Hymn of Preparation Be Known to Us in Breaking Bread NCH # 342

Holy Communion

**The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper**  
*Invitation to the Table*  
*Prayer of Consecration*  
*Bread and Cup*

Prayer of Thanksgiving (unison)

**Nourishing God, sometimes we tell ourselves that too much has taken place to begin again. We think the world is too far gone. We think we have made too many mistakes. But then we come to this Table and we get a glimpse of your kingdom. We come to this Table and all are welcomed, all are seen, all are fed. Thank you for the gift of this fresh start. Thank you for meeting us in ordinary bread and juice to remind us that it's never too late to build your kingdom here. We are grateful. Amen.**

\*Hymn Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates NCH # 117

Benediction

\*Benediction Response

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

Put hope 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 hope in - to each oth - er's hands, and  
21 ten - der - ness en - fold it.

Postlude

Wake, Awake, For Night is Flying Johann Sebastian Bach  
Arranged by Lawrence Grant  
Sandy Nolan - organ

## 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 lieu 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, boxed breads, cake and brownie mixes.

### **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.

**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](mailto:bbagbygrose@vnacarenewengland.org)

**Quilty Pleasures Quilt Guild** has resumed meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month 6-9pm. All experiences WELCOME. For questions contact: [RPloettner@Gmail.com](mailto:RPloettner@Gmail.com).

## Worship Ministers for Today’s Service

Liturgist: Jonathan MacDowell

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

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

Communion is prepared by  
Dianne Cavanaugh and Deb Therrien

The flowers this Sunday are given by Gail Pendergast  
in memory of her mother, Mimi Hanson, and her brother, Kenneth Hanson

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](mailto:aidan@woodridgechurchri.org)

Eric Van Dervort, Music Minister  
[ewvandervort1@gmail.com](mailto:ewvandervort1@gmail.com)

Sandy Nolan, Organist  
[sanolan00@gmail.com](mailto:sanolan00@gmail.com)

Barbara Stifano, Administrative Assistant  
Office hours 9am – 1pm M-F [woodridgechurch@verizon.net](mailto:woodridgechurch@verizon.net)  
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