

Woodbury United Methodist Church



ADVENT CONSPIRACY



WORSHIP
FULLY



SPEND
LESS



GIVE
MORE



LOVE
ALL

Saturday, December 24, 2022

5pm Worship

Woodbury United Methodist Church

December 24, 2022

Christmas Eve

*Please stand as you are able.

At 4:55, the worship team will gather at the front of the sanctuary for a brief prayer. Any who would like to come forward and participate are welcome.

WE COME TOGETHER IN PRAISE

PRELUDE *I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day* arr. Linda Lamb
Bell Choir

GREETING Pastor Michael Cobb

*CAROL *O Come, All Ye Faithful* UMH #234 v. 1, 3, 4

*A CHRISTMAS PRAYER (unison)

Emmanuel, I don't want to miss all that today holds. The joy, the anticipation, the significance. Like the shepherds many years ago, I come to seek Jesus. The One who brings light and hope into this dark world. The One who comes to serve and love the least of these. The One who promises never to leave me nor forsake me. The One who is Emmanuel – God with me. I wait for You expectantly, ready to receive all that You bring. Come in close to my heart. Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE Shay Family

Hope: God, we pray for those who feel hopeless today. May your light begin to shine more brightly in their lives. Thank you for the hope we have in Jesus.

Peace: God, we pray for all who suffer from violence, for all who live in fear of violence. May your peace surround and protect them. Thank you for the peace you offer through Jesus.

Joy: God, we pray for those who are grieving and sad on this day of celebration. May they know the light of your joy, even if they cannot feel happy right now. Thank you that we can know joy through Jesus.

Love: God, we pray for all people who feel unloved today. May they know your deep love for them. Thank you for showing us how much you love us by sending Jesus.

Christ Candle: God, please help us to share the light of your hope, peace, joy, and love with our world. Thank you for the gift of Jesus and thank you for this day of celebration! **Amen.**

ADVENT SONG *Light the Candle*

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

WE LISTEN FOR THE WORD OF GOD

GOSPEL LESSONS FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

Barb Hunt & Lynne Ramsden

GOSPEL LESSON Luke 2:1-5

ANTHEM *Do You Hear What I Hear* Gloria Baker
Anna, Grace, Julia Richardson

GOSPEL LESSON Luke 2:6-7

CAROL *O Little Town of Bethlehem* UMH #230 v 1, 4

GOSPEL LESSON Luke 2:8-14

CAROL *Joy to the World* UMH #246 v 1, 2, 4

GOSPEL LESSON Luke 2:15-20

SERMON The Advent Conspiracy Rev. Cobb

WE RESPOND IN FAITH

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all. Jesus Christ has shown us how to live: loving God and loving neighbor, sharing what we have, engaging in acts of mercy and justice. As we celebrate his birth and wait in hope for his coming again, let us offer the gifts of our lives before him.

THE OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS

OFFERTORY ANTHEM *Baby, What You Goin' To Be?* Natalie Sleeth

*RESPONSE OF PRAISE

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise Him, all creatures here below
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel
Born is the King of Israel.**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Glory to God in the highest heaven! We praise your name with our offerings and tithes. We give these gifts in recognition of Jesus, a tiny babe who from humble birth was created great in your light. Thank you, Gracious God, for pure, unbounded love wrapped in clothes laying in a manger – a gift so great to share that it could not be contained. Let the joy we feel in our hearts overflow in unending praise. **Amen.**

WE SEEK GOD'S PRESENCE IN PRAYER

PASTORAL PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER (unison)

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 forever. Amen.

*HYMN

What Child Is This

UMH #219 v 1, 3

SHARING THE LIGHT

THE PASSING OF THE LIGHT John 8:12; Matthew 5:14-16
Pastor Michael Cobb

ANTHEM *O Holy Night* A. Adam
 Anna Richardson
*CAROL *Silent Night, Holy Night* UMH #239

THE TRIUMPH OF THE LIGHT John 1:4-5

A CHRISTMAS EVE BENEDICTION

Tonight, as we celebrate God is with us in the birth of Jesus, let us continue to live lives of hope, peace, joy, and love.
Share God's love with the shepherds you meet on the hillside.
Let the communion of the Holy Spirit fill your heart with glad tidings like the angels.
And the Prince of Peace born again tonight, may He live in your heart to comfort and challenge you as you seek to live as one of his disciples. **Amen.**

POSTLUDE *In Julci Jubilo* JS Bach
Special thanks: Christo Jamo - trumpet

Visitors are warmly welcomed!

Thanks to all those making special *contributions to our worship service today*;-Barb Hunt & Lynne Ramsden, *Liturgists*; Lydia Temple, Kelly Etcheto, Barbara Etcheto, *Greeters and Ushers*; Mark Davis, *AV Technician*. Liam McGrath & Mary Grace Styblo, *Acolytes*

A PRAYER FOR PEACEMAKING

Our Lord Jesus,
As you have forgiven me, help me to forgive another.
As you have brought peace to our world through Your blood, may I seek that peace and reconciliation in all that I do, even when it costs me.
Give me a humility that chooses not to fight or to defend, but to relate.
Give me a heart ready to engage and encounter instead of hiding or resisting.
Give me the courage to love, to reach out, and the resilience to never give up.
Give me peace, Your peace, which the world cannot give.
May it lead us to be One, as You and the Father are One. And may I bring You glory as I seek this peace always. **Amen.**

Woodbury United Methodist Church

We are a welcoming Christian fellowship who celebrate and share God's love with everyone. We seek a closer relationship with Jesus Christ. Inspired by His example, we strive to be God's hands in this world. Empowered by God's word, we proclaim the Gospel and serve through worship, study, mission, and community support.

Rev. J. Michael Cobb, Pastor

Pastor's e-mail: pastormichael@woodburyumc.net

Meg Temple, Lay Leader

Christopher Shay, Director of Music

Matti Paparazzo, Administrative Assistant

4 Church Street, Woodbury, CT, 06798

203-263-4775 www.woodburyumc.net

Church e-mail: wumc@woodburyumc.net

A PRAYER FOR PREPARING A HOLIDAY MEAL

Good and gracious Heavenly Father,

Holiday meals give us the opportunity to gather with those we love. And, as we nourish our bodies with the food we prepare, let us also **nourish our souls** as we prepare it.

Holy Spirit, **we invite** You into this preparation time, sanctify each element from the table's setting to each food course.

May each person feel Your welcoming spirit of hospitality. My loved ones have a place at this table because

You have made a place for us at Yours.

Father, I invite You into this meal, from choosing the food to the day of cooking, to sitting down to enjoy.

With each step, may I be **mindful** of Your goodness, Your generosity, Your provision.

I enter my kitchen – God, anoint my hands as they chop, mince, and stir. Pour out Your love for me as I pour out my love to family and friends through this food.

May this meal be an expression of my love for You and for others. Salt here, pinch of pepper there, as I season each dish with love, help me to intentionally season my words as well. Holy Spirit, flavor our conversations today with much grace.

May this be so. And as these aromas fill this kitchen Father, fill this house with Your presence. Each plate and napkin in its place await each person in their seat. Here we come, the healthy, the sick, the rough and the righteous, the functional and otherwise.

All are welcomed at Your table. Make our table Yours.

Bless this food, this sacred time, these people who bear Your image. In Jesus' Name,
Amen.

Hello Christmas Eve guests and visitors!

Thank you so much for worshipping with us. We hope you enjoy the music from our bell and vocal choirs, hearing the old familiar scriptures, and my favorite part ever since I was a child – the feeling of awe and beauty when the sanctuary lights dim and a sea of candlelight spreads across the room, “Silent Night, Holy Night” filling the air.

We are a church with a traditional worship style plus a few unconventional flourishes, small enough to get to know everyone, large enough to support lots of activities and service opportunities – and in all things grounded in love for God and each another.

Please ask questions if you would like to learn more about anything else, and feel free to ask me directly at pastormichael@woodburyumc.net.

Thanks again for visiting us. We hope to see you again, soon.

Merry Christmas,
Pastor Michael Cobb

Poinsettia Memorials

Given By:

- Jen & Rod Carnes in celebration of Christ's birth and new beginnings
- Mark Davis in memory of Bruce and Norma Davis, Roderick and Doris Blair, and Meghan Dowling
- Jeff and Barb Hunt in honor of our church family
- Catherine Mason and Family in memory of Ted and Norma Mason

- Carolyn and Chris Shay in memory of loved ones and in honor of our grandchildren: Luke, Owen, Liam, Colette, Lily, and Sophie
- Christine Smith in memory of Jack O'Brian and Hope and George Smith
- Pastor Michael and Shannon Cobb in honor of their parents, Sue and Bill Cobb, and Linda and Michael Foran
- Nancy Chen

A Prayer For Enjoying Your Morning Coffee

God,

You are the giver of all good gifts, and, thankfully, that includes coffee.

Oh, how I love coffee. Coffee is familiar.

Coffee means a new day, filled with exciting possibilities. And as I begin my day, coffee provides a quiet opportunity to slow down, reflect, and focus on You.

So, thank You.

As I drink this cup (and maybe a few more if I'm honest), my prayer is that I ultimately taste not only this coffee but Your goodness and faithfulness, too.

Like the Psalmist says, may I taste and see that You are good.

And may drinking this tangible reminder of Your faithfulness help me look to You throughout the rest of my day.

Please show me what it means to live a life that glorifies You.

With these first couple of sips, I give my day to You.

May it be an act of worship, holy and pleasing in Your sight. Amen.

(from the Advent Conspiracy Liturgies resource)



You can learn a lot about us from our website and Facebook pages:

www.WoodburyUMC.net



Facebook: /woodburyumcct



Instagram: /woodburyumcct



YouTube: <https://tinyurl.com/47xzt4zv>