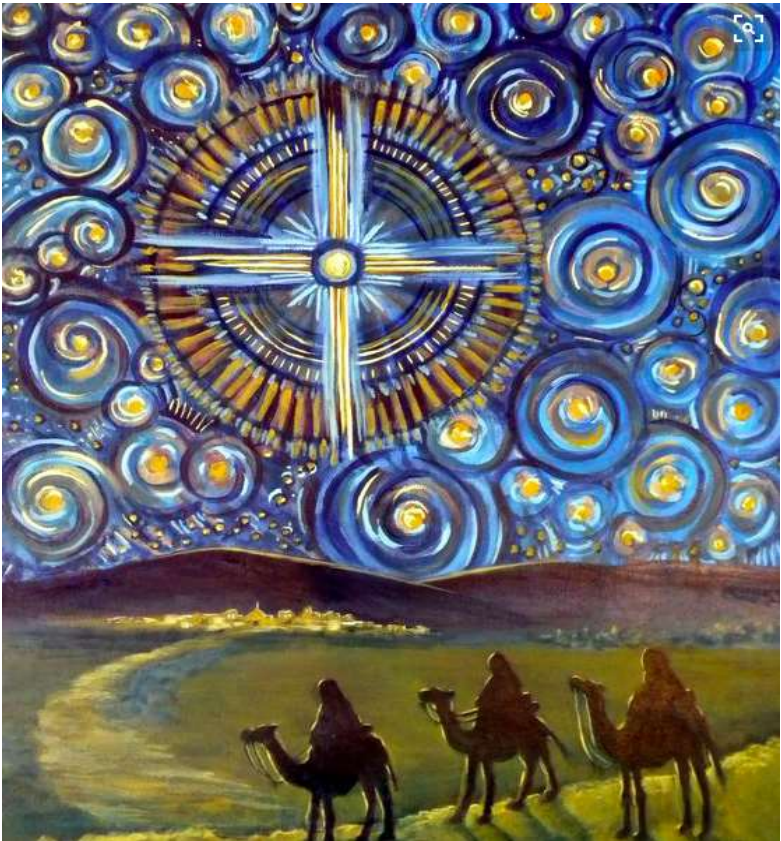


Woodbury United Methodist Church



Sunday December 24, 2023
Candlelight Service
5:00 PM Worship

ADVENT SONG

Light the Candle of Christ

**Light the candle of Christ today
The Giver of light is here
Welcome the love we hope and sigh for,
But only Christ can give
Flicker and flame and glow with light
Light up the world around you
Flicker and flame and glow with light
Light up the world around you**

READING 1: Luke 1: 26-38

Orsin Lin

Following each lesson is said:

The Word was made flesh and lived among us:
and we have seen his glory.

ANTHEM

Away in a Manger

Bell Choir

READING 2: Matthew 1: 18-25

Sam Temple

HYMN

O Little Town of Bethlehem

UMH #230
Verses 1, 5

READING 3: Luke 2:2-20

Keri Lanish

HYMN

What Child Is This

UMH #219

READING 4: Matthew 2: 1-12

Meg Temple

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

THE OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

All Is Well

Marty Parks

*RESPONSE OF PRAISE

A Christmas Doxology

tune: *The First Noel*

**Praise God for whom all blessings flow.
Praise him, all creatures here below
Praise him above, ye heavenly host.
Praise Father, son, and Holy Ghost.
Noel! Noel!
Born is The King of Israel. Amen.**

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

SERMON

CHRISTMAS CREED

**I believe in Jesus Christ and in the power of the gospel,
which began in Bethlehem.**

**I believe in the one whose spirit glorified a small village,
of whose coming the shepherds saw the sign,
and for whom there was no room at the inn.**

**I believe in the one whose life changed the course of
history, for whom the kings of the earth had no power,
and who was not understood by the proud.**

**I believe in the one to whom the poor, the oppressed,
the discouraged, the afflicted, the sick, the blind, the
leprous gave welcome and accepted as Lord and Savior.**

**I believe in the one who, with love, changed the hearts of
the proud and with his life showed that it is more
important to serve than to be served, and that the greatest
glory is giving your life for others.**

**I believe in peace, which is not the absence of war,
but justice among all people and nations
and love among all.**

**I believe in reconciliation, forgiveness,
and the transforming power of the gospel.**

**I believe that in Christmas is strength and peace
that this world can change if, with humility,
and with faith, we kneel before the manger.**

I believe that I must be the first one to do so.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Following each petition is said:

God of Glory, come to your people.

In your mercy, set us free.

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.

SOLO

The Virgin's Slumber Song
Carolyn Shay

Max Regar

ENTERING THE SILENCE

We will observe a minute of silence.

THE PASSING OF THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

Please have your candle in hand. Light from the Christ Candle will be shared with people at the ends of the pews. Pass that light to the person standing next to you by holding your lit candle upright while the unlit candle is tipped to receive the flame. You may keep your candle lit through the Benediction.

*HYMN

Silent Night, Holy Night

UMH #239

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Un Dulci Jubilo

arr. Held

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. Herb Miller, Pastor

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

Congratulations for Concert

Congratulations to Rod Carnes for a spectacular Christmas concert that captured both the bright fun and the deep joy of Christmas. It's been a long time since I laughed in a concert, but I caught a bunch of people laughing at that "Ballad of Mrs. C". I needed a good laugh in these dark times. But I also needed Sarah Kate's luminous warmth as the cold of winter closes in. It's amazing how she blends so perfectly with Kate Keeler. Dylan and Matt contributed a variety and musical sophistication as classy as any professional ensemble. What a blessing!

I'd also like to thank the Bell Choir for their sparkling opening to this program.

~Chris Shay

Food Bank

Woodbury UMC has pledged to help supply the Woodbury Food Bank with juice for a three-month period. We are asking our members to help us provide juice for our neighbors in need. The most requested are cranberry and cranberry juice combos, apple juice and juice boxes. Your help is so much appreciated in this ministry. Thank you.

Advent Season Final Thoughts

As we celebrate this Christmas Eve and Christmas with our families, please take some silent time with God to reflect on the following questions.

- As you prepare for Christmas, what is important to you?
- What are your hopes and fears for Christmas?
- Is there something you need to let go of to help Christmas live up to your desires and longings? Is there something that you need to add?
- In what ways might God be asking you to prepare your house (heart, life, relationships, etc) so that Jesus might come?
- In what parts of your life do you already see Christ making a home? How can you nurture the growth of the Holy One in this area of your life?

Christmas Poinsettias



Given by:

- ❖ Bob Asman in loving memory of Martha.
- ❖ Bud and JoAnn Behlman in celebration of our grandson, Benjamin James Toomes.
- ❖ Mark Davis in loving memory of Bruce and Norma Davis and Roderick and Doris Blair.
- ❖ Barb and Jeff Hunt in honor of "Our Church Family".
- ❖ Joann King in honor and celebration of my cousin, Eleanor Barkauskas.
- ❖ Sandra Purdy in memory of Earl and Lila Garrett.
- ❖ Carol Quinby
- ❖ Christopher and Carolyn Shay in honor of our six grandchildren and in memory of our parents, Ty and Libby Ayars and Alyce and Joseph Bishop.
- ❖ Christine Smith in loving memory of my parents, George and Hope Smith and my brother-in-law, Jack O'Brien.
- ❖ Sharon Story and family in loving memory of Erv Story; husband, Dad and "Pop".
- ❖ Meg Temple in loving memory of my father, Thomas Lillie, Jr., who made Christmas special!



The Legend of the Poinsettia

The legend of the poinsettia comes from Mexico. It tells of a girl named Maria and her little brother Pablo. They were very poor but always looked forward to the Christmas festival. Each year a large manger scene was set up in the village church, and the days before Christmas were filled with parades and parties. The two children loved Christmas, but were always saddened because they had no money to buy presents. They especially wished that they could give something to the church for the Baby Jesus. But they had nothing.

One Christmas Eve, Maria and Pablo set out for church to attend the service. On their way they picked some weeds growing along the roadside and decided to take them as their gift to the Baby Jesus in the manger scene. Of course they were teased by other children when they arrived with their gift, but they said nothing for they knew they had given what they could. Maria and Pablo began placing the green plants around the manger and miraculously, the green top leaves turned into bright red petals, and soon the manger was surrounded by beautiful star-like flowers and so we see them today.