

Welcome to Church of Christ
December 15, 2024 ~ Third Sunday of Advent
We are honored to worship God with you today!

Prelude *Savior of the Nations, Come* (Nun komm der heiden heiland) - arr. R. Powell

Call to Worship (inspired by Isaiah 12)

~Joel Nelson

Leader: Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and will not be afraid,
for the Lord is my strength and my might; God has become my salvation."

People: **With joy we will draw water from the wells of salvation!**

Leader: And you will say on that day: "Give thanks to the Lord;
call on God's name."

People: **Let us make known God's deeds across the universe;
let us proclaim that the name of the Lord is exalted.**

Leader: Sing praises to the Lord, for God has done gloriously;
let this be known in all the earth.

People: **Shout aloud and sing for joy, for God is great in our midst!**

All: **With joy we will draw water from the wells of salvation!**

Silent Prayer

The Lord's Prayer (trespasses/debts)

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 (debts), as we forgive those who trespass against us (our debtors). And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen

Lighting of the Advent Candle: Joy

~Felix and Jan Graham-Jones

Hymn *Hope, Peace, Joy and Love*
Verses 1, 2, 3 and 4

(see printed sheet)

Vs 1 The time now has come for the lights to appear as we open our hearts and begin a new year. Hope, peace, joy and love will illumine the night as we wait for the one who will bring us the light.

Vs 2 Hope stirs our minds to remain calm and true to our calling to help craft a future that's new for all of God's people in all times and place, that they feel God's strong presence and our warm embrace.

Vs 3 Peace seems elusive in this day and time but we are reminded: in your heart and mine peace can be a spark that erupts to ignite - spreading the message of God's goodness and light.

Vs 4 In sadness and sorrow joy leads us to know that living and loving for others will show that joy comes to those who are open to know that God is inside both the comfort and woe.

Remembering Susan Pratt

Words of Remembrance

Anthem *In My Father's House* - P. W. J. Stopford

Scripture: Luke 3:7-18

~Joel Nelson

John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Therefore, bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire." And the crowds asked him, "What, then, should we do?" In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none, and whoever has food must do likewise." Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages." As the people were filled with expectation and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water, but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." So with many other exhortations he proclaimed the good news to the people.

Sermon "What Should We Do for Joy?"

Hymn 122 *God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen* (Pilgrim Hymnal)

Vs 1 God rest you merry, gentlemen, let nothing you dismay, remember Christ our savior, was born on Christmas Day, to save us all from Satan's power when we were gone astray. O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy; O tidings of comfort and joy!

Vs 2 From God, our heavenly Father, a blessed angel came; and unto certain shepherds brought tidings of the same: how that in Bethlehem was born the Son of God by name. O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy; O tidings of comfort and joy!

Vs 3 "Fear not, then," said the angel, "Let nothing you affright; this day is born a Savior, of a pure virgin bright, to free all those who trust in him from Satan's power and might." O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy; O tidings of comfort and joy!

Vs 4 Now to the Lord sing praises, all you within this place, and with true love and brotherhood each other now embrace; this holy tide of Christmas doth bring redeeming grace. O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy; O tidings of comfort and joy!

Light of Service *Cold Weather Shelter*, Torrington ~Virginia Chalmers

We have a chance to offer financial gifts in support of Spirit-led work. Undesignated gifts go to the recipient named above. Please use the white envelopes in the pews to designate giving otherwise. There is no obligation, and we always welcome prayers for our LOS recipients. Thank you!

Offertory *People, Look East* - E. Butler

Doxology (two versions are offered) Praise God from whom all blessings flow, Praise God, all creatures here below; Praise God above, ye heavenly host; Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen. OR: 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. Amen.

Prayer of Dedication

Sharing Joys and Church Life Updates

Sharing Prayer Concerns

Silent Prayer and Meditation

Pastoral Prayer

Hymn 200 *While by the Sheep* (Worship and Rejoice)

Vs 1 While by the sheep we watched at night, glad tidings brought an angel bright. How great our joy! Great our Joy! Joy, joy, joy! Joy, joy, joy! Praise we the Lord in heaven on high! Praise we the Lord in heaven on high!

Vs 2 There shall be born, so he did say, in Bethlehem a Child today. How great our joy! Great our Joy! Joy, joy, joy! Joy, joy, joy! Praise we the Lord in heaven on high! Praise we the Lord in heaven on high!

Vs 3 There shall the Child lie in a stall, this Child who shall redeem us all. How great our joy! Great our Joy! Joy, joy, joy! Joy, joy, joy! Praise we the Lord in heaven on high! Praise we the Lord in heaven on high!

Vs 4 This gift of God we'll cherish well, that ever joy our hearts shall fill. How great our joy! Great our Joy! Joy, joy, joy! Joy, joy, joy! Praise we the Lord in heaven on high! Praise we the Lord in heaven on high!

Our Common Commission

Let us go forth into the world in peace, being of good courage, holding fast to that which is good, rendering to no one evil for evil, strengthening the faint-hearted, supporting the weak, helping

the afflicted, honoring all persons, loving and serving the Lord, and rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Benediction

Postlude *Awake, the Voice is Calling Us (Wachet auf)* - P. Nicolai, arr. J. Walther
Please remain seated to listen or depart quietly.

We gladly list these prayer concerns and ask you to keep us apprised of any updates so that we have the most current information. If you would like a pastoral visit please call or email Pastor Erick (860-303-0910, reverendole@gmail.com).

Members needing our prayers:

Patty Cammilletti, Steven, Tina & Aaliyah Chausse, Linda Creedon, Bonnie Greenwood, Holly Kelsey, Will Kelsey, Arlene Patten, Dan Patten, Cindy Sinclair, John Thew

Ongoing concerns for our relatives and friends:

Annattie P., Eric, Jo, Donna Aakjar (Nancy Perry's sister), Andrew Anderson (Ruth Adotte), Jay Atkinson, Robert Battis (Leslie's father), Andrea Blacklow (Kristin Mudge's friend), Jack Bowman (former music director of Salisbury UCC), Marcia Brenizer (Jen Pfaltz's mother), Denis Combes (Jason Combes' father), John Funchion, Fran and Arnold Gellman (Tina Olsen's aunt and uncle), Judy Green, Dennis Carr Hannifin (Sally Carr's son), Nathan Hazeman (friend of David Bourne), Olivia Howard (Ky Byrne's cousin), Jim Korner (Liz Wilbur's brother), Bethany Lee, Serena Livingston (Kristin Mudge), Kathy Loomis (substitute preacher), Don and Lynn Martin (Ruth Adotte), Rick Martin (Ruth Adotte), Bill Patrick (Lyn's husband) and family, Rev. Kenric and Debby Prescott, Constance Rotondo (Jane Williams), Desi Smith (Bonnie Greenwood), Ryan Sterba, Rob Thew, Sue Ellen Thomas (Pastor Erick's sister), Dennis Watlington (Tim Hitchcock), Judi Welch

Those who are grieving - the families of:

Kerry Garside, Stephen Getz, George Green, Jackie Hamad, The Rev. Paul Heller, Avery Nelson, Aaron Pelletier, Sue Pratt, Owen Simmons, Mary Sager

In the wider community:

Leigh Cappabianca (missionary in Turkey), Laura Smith (missionary in Venezuela), The people of Haiti, Israel, Gaza, Ukraine, Syria - and all enduring ongoing violence, and the people impacted by recent hurricanes Helene and Milton and other severe weather.

CHANCES TO LEARN, LIVE & SERVE LOVE:

Carol Sing "On the Road" This Saturday - All are welcome to join in the singing on Saturday, December 14 as the choir and friends (you included) take over the dining room at the [Falls Village Inn](#). Make your reservations soon as this traditional night could be a sellout!

Christmas Eve Readers and Greeters Needed - Please contact Pastor Erick if you would like to greet people or read Scripture (or both) at either 5 PM or 10 PM on Christmas Eve. All are welcome to take part - of course, we particularly love to involve young people who may be home for the holidays. Thank you!

"Getting to Know Jesus" Continues This Week - Wed. 12/18 at 7 PM

All are welcome to join this Advent learning opportunity. Led by Pastor Erick, we are exploring Scripture and other writings about Jesus as we approach our celebration of his birth. Our final session will focus on "Beyond Bethlehem." No experience is needed. Please let Pastor Erick know if you plan to take part.

Administrative Assistant Position – Barb LaMere plans to retire at the end of this year – she will be missed! Please take a moment to thank Barb directly. Interested parties should contact office@cofcucc.org.

The Blue Christmas Tree - We have continued our tradition of placing a tree with blue lights and ornaments outside the entrance to Battell Chapel. for all who wish to remember a loved one who is no longer sharing this special season with us. All should feel free to come hang an ornament in honor or memory of that special someone. You may also add an ornament to acknowledge that we all may feel something other than "merry" during this time. However we are feeling, may we trust in the truth that we are beloved in God's sight. Ornaments are available for all to use, or you may donate one of your choosing (please understand that we cannot guarantee the return of donated ornaments).

2025 Financial Support Needed - All are invited to join in making a pledge of support for 2025 so that we can continue to serve as a beacon of hope, peace, joy and love, a place where those who need help can find it. [Click Here to Indicate Your Support for 2025](#). Automated Monthly Giving is Available! To make a pledge, you may also call the church office (860-542-5721) Tuesday through Friday, 9 AM to 2 PM.

Reverse Advent Calendar Available - Please help stock the shelves of the Food Pantry by taking part in our tradition of a Reverse Advent Calendar. During December, you may use the guide available by clicking [HERE](#) to fill a box that we invite you to deliver to the Norfolk Food Pantry here in Battell Chapel. Thank you!

Coffee Mugs "to Go" - Anyone who purchased a custom-made coffee mug in the past is invited to take them home – thank you!

Christmas Wreaths on the church and chapel doors are given in memory of:
Our parents, Robert & Dolores Wolff, and Rev. B.F. Anderson; and our grandparents the Wolff, Wellman, Moller, and Anderson families by Eric and Sue Anderson; Ted and Elisabeth Childs and Darrell and Elaine Russ by Betsy Gill; Our parents Marian and Stanley Civco and Louise and Robert Tangarone by Stan and Marie Civco; Kenneth Satherlie and Karen & Jimmy Davidson by their families; Eve Thew by John, Ann, and Rob Thew; Kathalene White by Nels and Phyllis White

Christmas Memorial Flowers - If you are interested in sharing poinsettias or other flowers during these coming weeks in honor or memory of someone, please call the church office at (860) 542-5721 or email office@cofcucc.org. Thank you!

Christmas Fête* Sunday During Sunday Worship on 12/22 in Battell Chapel – Please join in the Christmas fun as we celebrate with lots of special Christmas music, poetry, Scripture, and more during worship. Our 10 AM service will be followed by a special light luncheon and time for Christmas crafting. Free and open to all – please spread the word! (*"Fête" comes from the medieval Latin word festus, which means "holiday" or "party" – just right!)

Christmas Eve Worship

Lessons and Carols at 5 PM

Candlelight at 10 PM

All are welcome to join us for these special celebrations of Christ's birth!

"Clothes Closet" Donations Welcome

We would appreciate short jackets (no long coats). Thank you!

Food Pantry Items of the Week - This week the Food pantry especially needs: tea, cereal, Spam or canned chicken and empty egg cartons. Thank you!