



The _____
First Congregational Church
of Woodstock _____

*Declaring, "Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today,
and forever." Hebrews 13:8*

*December 3rd, 2023
The First Sunday in Advent*

The Order of Morning Worship

December 3rd, 2023

The First Sunday in Advent

Ten-thirty

Welcome & Announcements

Elder Stephen Briggs

Prelude & Silent Prayer

The Advent Reading

Cora Koop and Anne Koop

Leader: *Come, let us light the first Advent Candle!*

Family: We can't wait to see Jesus who is coming back for us!

Leader: How do candles point us to Jesus who is *the Light of the World?*

Family: Jesus said, "I am the Light of the world. He who follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the Light of Life." (John 8:12)

Leader: What is the promise God has given to His people?

Family: The promise was first given by God that a child born of the woman would deliver us from sin and death.

Leader: Who is this promised Deliverer?

Family: Our Deliverer, Jesus, who is Messiah, the anointed One, came just as He promised. (John 4:25-26)

Leader: What else did Messiah promise?

Family: Jesus promised that He will return for us and save all who trust in Him as true Messiah. (John 14:1-7)

Leader: Hebrews 6:13-20

For when *God made a promise to Abraham*, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, saying, "Surely I will bless you and multiply you." And thus Abraham, having patiently waited, obtained the promise. For people swear by something greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. *So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath*, so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us. *We have this as a sure and*

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

"The Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their sins,"
declares the LORD. Is. 59:20

1. O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
2. O come, O come, thou Lord of might, who to thy tribes, on
3. O come, thou Rod of Jes - se, free thine own from Sa - tan's
4. O come, thou Day-spring from on high, and cheer us by thy
5. O come, thou Key of Da - vid, come, and o - pen wide our

Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here,
Si - nai's height, in an - cient times didst give the law
tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell thy peo - ple save,
draw - ing nigh; dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of night,
heav'n - ly home; make safe the way that leads on high,

un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
in cloud and maj - es - ty and awe.
and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave. Re - joice! Re - joice! Em -
and death's dark shad - ows put to flight.
and close the path to mis er - y.

man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el.

Scriptural Call to Repentance Isaiah 30:15b, 18 Elder

“In returning and rest you shall be saved;
in quietness and in trust shall be your strength.”
But you were unwilling...
Therefore the LORD waits to be gracious to you,
and therefore He exalts himself to show mercy to you.
For the LORD is a God of justice;
blessed are all those who wait for Him.

Prayer of Collective Confession Psalm 51 Congregation

Have mercy on us, O God, according to Your steadfast love; according to Your abundant mercy blot out our transgressions. Wash us thoroughly from our iniquity, and cleanse us from our sin! For we know our transgressions, and our sin is ever before us. Against You, You only, have we sinned and done what is evil in Your sight, so that You may be justified in Your words and blameless in Your judgment.

Silent Reflection and Confession

Proclamation of Forgiveness Hebrews 2:18 Elder

For because He (Jesus) Himself has suffered when tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted.

Missions Moment Teen Challenge Men

Pastoral Prayer Pastor Doug Warren

Offering (collected from back to front) Congregation

❖ Scripture Reading Malachi 4:4-6 Elder

⁴“Remember the law of my servant Moses, the statutes and rules that I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel.

⁵“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. ⁶And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction.”

❖ Hymn of Reflection #216 *Infant Holy, Infant Lowly* Congregation

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

216

He is Lord of lords and King of kings—and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers. Rev. 17:14

1. In - fant ho - ly, in - fant low - ly, for his bed a cat - tle stall;
 2. Flocks were sleep - ing: shep - herds keep - ing vig - il till the morn - ing new

ox - en low - ing, lit - tle know - ing Christ, the babe, is Lord of all.
 saw the glo - ry, heard the sto - ry, tid - ings of a gos - pel true.

Swift are wing - ing an - gels sing - ing, no - els ring - ing, tid - ings bring - ing:
 Thus re - joic - ing, free from sor - row, prais - es voic - ing, greet the mor - row:

Christ the babe is Lord of all. Christ the babe is Lord of all.
 Christ the babe was born for you. Christ the babe was born for you.

“The Gospel Comes to Zechariah & Elisabeth”

Luke 1:5-25

⁵In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, of the division of Abijah. And he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. ⁶And they were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord. ⁷But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years.

⁸Now while he was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty, ⁹according to the custom of the priesthood, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. ¹⁰And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense. ¹¹And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. ¹²And Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. ¹³But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. ¹⁴And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, ¹⁵for he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. ¹⁶And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, ¹⁷and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared.”

¹⁸And Zechariah said to the angel, “How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years.” ¹⁹And the angel answered him, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. ²⁰And behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time.” ²¹And the people were waiting for Zechariah, and they were wondering at his delay in the temple. ²²And when he came out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the temple. And he kept making signs to them and remained mute. ²³And when his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

²⁴After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she

kept herself hidden, saying, ²⁵ "Thus the Lord has done for me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my reproach among people."

❖ Hymn of Response #196 *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* Congregation

Waiting for the consolation of Israel. Luke 2:25

1. Come, thou long - ex - pect - ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo - ple free;
2. Joy to those who long to see thee, Day-spring from on high, ap - pear;
3. Come to earth to taste our sad - ness, he whose glo - ries knew no end;
4. Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child and yet a king,

from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.
come, thou prom - ised Rod of Jes - se, of thy birth we long to hear!
by his life he brings us glad - ness, our Re - deem - er, Shep - herd, Friend.
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king - dom bring.

Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,
O'er the hills the an - gels sing - ing news, glad tid - ings of a birth:
Leav - ing rich - es with - out num - ber, born with - in a cat - tle stall;
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it rule in all our hearts a - lone;

dear De - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, joy of ev - 'ry long - ing heart.
"Go to him, your prais - es bring - ing; Christ the Lord has come to earth."
this the ev - er - last - ing won - der, Christ was born the Lord of all.
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it, raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

Communion

Congregation

❖ Communion Hymn #195

Joy to the World

Congregation

Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Ps. 98:4

♩ D A⁷ D G A

1. Joy to the world! The Lord is come: let earth re - ceive her
 2. Joy to the earth! The Sav - ior reigns: let men their songs em -
 3. No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in - fest the
 4. He rules the world with truth and grāce, and makes the na - tions

D 7

King; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,
 ploy; while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
 ground; he comes to make his bless - ings flow
 prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous - ness

A

and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
 far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
 and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his
 and heav'n and na - ture sing,

♩ D D/A A⁷ and D 7

sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.
 heav'n and na - ture sing,

Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever.

The Congregation may be seated after the Benediction for silent prayer.

Postlude

~~ Organist: Jonathan Denham ~~

~~ Please ensure cell phones are off ~~

Prelude: Wake, Awake, for Night is Flying (Bach)

Offertory: Gratitude (Lake)--performed by Teen Challenge

Postlude: Joy to the World (Lasky)

Save the Date!

Today! Sunday, December 3 — Lunch with Teen Challenge Men

Friday, December 8-Saturday, December 9 — Wassail Weekend

Friday, 4:30 & 5:30 pm — FCCW Building & History Tours

Friday, 5:00 pm — Organ Concert

Saturday, 11:00 am-2:00 pm — Hot Wassail and DIY s'mores on the lawn

Saturday, 2:00 pm — Wassail Parade Watch Party

Saturday, 3:00 pm — The Ten of NYC Concert

Sunday, December 24 — 5:00 pm Candlelight Christmas Eve Service

Teen Challenge Vermont

Today we have the privilege of hearing from the Teen Challenge Men, both in the worship service and at a pizza lunch after the coffee hour.

The men also have some woodworking projects that they have done for sale. If you are looking for that perfect Christmas gift, help the men out by buying one of the wood crafts they have done in their woodworking shop!

Wassail Weekend

If you'd like to help with Wassail drinks and s'mores on the FCCW front lawn this Saturday, Dec 9th from 11am-2pm or with handing out tickets for The Ten concert at 3:00, please contact Keri Bristow at kerilynbristow@gmail.com or (603) 359-3948.

Young Adult Fellowship Group will meet tonight
at 6 pm in the church library.

Christmas Poinsettias

Poinsettias always add to the festive color of Christmas and can be given as a memorial to a loved one and taken home after the Christmas Eve Service. To order a 6" red or white Poinsettia, contact Christine Morton or Alison Briggs before December 14, 2023. The cost for each Poinsettia will be \$10. Please remember to make your check out to FCCW.

Advent and Christmas Devotional Booklet

Today marks the beginning of the Advent season, and for the next several weeks we will be using the Advent and Christmas booklet for daily devotions rather than the weekly Taking Gathered Worship home. Be sure to pick up your copy from the back table!

Christmas Eve Service

This year our traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will be held on Sunday, December 24 at 5:00 pm. Pick up a few of the invitations on the back table and invite your friends and family to join you as we celebrate Christ's birth.
