



United Methodist Church
of Westport and Weston

December 1, 2024
1st Sunday of Advent

Hybrid Worship – 10:00am

*Our Vision is to Know, to Live
and to Share the Love of Jesus Christ.*

CENTERING PRAYER

God of deliverance, you rescued Daniel from the mouths of the lions when he was punished for worshipping you. Liberate and give hope to all who are endangered for the sake of their faith, and rescue us from anything that separates us from worshipping only you. In the name of Jesus Christ, our redeemer. Amen.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor Heather

PRELUDE

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
John Hoddinott, guitar; Ahyoung Son, piano

15th cen. French melody

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Based on Jeremiah 33

The time is surely coming
when our love for one another
and all of God's children will increase.

**We live into that time
with hope and joy.**

The day is surely coming
when God will strengthen our hearts
with humility and holiness.

**We anticipate that day
as we reach out to serve
all of those in need.**

The days are surely coming
when we will walk the paths
of faithfulness and steadfast love.

**We begin this Advent journey,
trusting that all of God's promises
will be fulfilled.**

*OPENING HYMN

Blessed Be the God of Israel
H. H. Hopson, Michael Perry ©1973 The Jubilate Group, OneLicense Song #6177

UMH 209

MESSAGE FOR ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

“HOPE”

Pastor Heather

Children are always welcome to remain in Worship. Children ages five and up are welcome to join Advent Activities in the classroom. The Nursery is not staffed, but is open, if you and your child need a place to retreat.

SCRIPTURE READING

Daniel 6:6-27

Cindy Glover

This is the Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

OFFERING OUR PRAYERS & GIFTS

Through our baptism and membership in the church, we covenant to give of our prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness. Financial gifts, tithes and offerings support the mission and ministries of this congregation and the connectional church. Online giving is available at WestportUMC.org.

Prayer cards may be placed in the offering plates to be lifted up during the Prayers of the People and/or added to the weekly Prayer List.

MUSIC OFFERING

Emmanuel

B. McGee, arr. C. Tornquist

©1976 C.A. Music (Admin. by Music Services, Inc.) CCLI Song #12949

Ahyoung Son, piano

*HYMN OF PRAISE

Tune: *O Come, O Come Emmanuel*

***Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise God, all Spirit messengers below.
Praise God, the source of all our gifts!
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.***

OFFERING PRAYER

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

“A Blessing for Beginning Again in Advent”

By Kate Bowler

God, could this be the year when we see it?
The goodness that is coming,
like starlight from a distant time?

Could this be the Advent when we sense it?
That the springtime of the soul
will one day last forever?

Could this be the Advent when we notice
the inbreaking of your coming promises?

Promises full of blessing:
of truth so clear, so bright
that every shadowy lie must flee away.
of compassion so deep, so strong
that everyone is encircled in its embrace.
of restoration so complete, so beautiful
that there is gladness everywhere.
and of justice so satisfying and so right,
that all will be well.

May this Advent be the new beginning,
as we learn to live by the light
of your coming promises.

Glimpsing the world through tears,
while also seeing something
sacred shining through too.

Our Truth. Our Light.

Our Promise incarnate.

Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

God be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to God.

Let us give thanks to God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

In the rich dark of winter, God makes an astounding promise: “I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up.” (Jeremiah 33:15)

In the wilderness, a voice cries out, longing for the Refiner’s fire, repair, and renewal, the promised birth (and rebirth) of hope.

Called to bear the weight and fruit of promise, Mary sings ancient trust—the song of generations—that God comes to fill the hungry and lift the humble. She sings that love and truth will meet, that justice and peace will kiss.

In the midst of uncertainty, Jesus assures his disciples: Just as the tree blooms, so the signs are clear that the kingdom of God is near.

In the deep of our own winter, we look for them: bud of hope, branch of peace, sprig of joy, blossom of love.

While around us the snares of fear and conflict lie in wait of infant hope, you, O Wisdom, O Endless Love, O Radiant Dawn, are there, keeping vigil with us, in this season of expectation.

We gather at this table, praying that crooked ways be made straight, that valley’s peace be lifted up and mountain’s might brought low so that all God’s people might rejoice together, saying:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is the one that comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest!**

We give thanks for the mystery and wonder revealed that first night, as humble people led by hope gathered in a quiet stable and were witness to your promise reborn. We give thanks for the blessing and love Jesus shared with all whom he met, in food and story.

We remember that, on the night before he was handed over to die, Jesus broke bread with his friends, blessed it, gave thanks, and said, “Take, eat. This is my body, which I give for you. When you share it, remember me.”

We remember that he took the cup and, giving thanks, said, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. When you drink it, remember me.”

Revealed in stable, cross, and empty tomb, we give thanks, O God, for your limitless love for all. With your people of all times and places, we await with hope the fulfillment of your vision for all creation, as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died; Christ has risen; Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and the cup. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ and one with each other. Encourage us to share your life and love, which make us truly holy. Transform us, God, and your world, and bless your children:

those who feel alone or afraid...

those who whose souls and homes are broken by violence...

those who will go hungry, thirsty, and cold tonight...

those who long only to hear that they are loved, now and in your eternal kin-dom.

God, made known in Jesus Christ, hear us pray as you taught us:

THE LORD'S PRAYER *(You are invited to pray in the version and language of your heart.)*

BREAKING THE BREAD

SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP

In the United Methodist Church, all who wish to receive the love and grace of Jesus are welcome at the Lord's Table. At the direction of the ushers, you will be invited forward to receive a cup of juice and piece of gluten-free bread. Move down the altar rail to eat the bread and drink the juice. Leave your empty cup in the altar rail. Please return to your seat by the side aisles.

If you need communion brought to you or prefer pre-sealed communion, please notify the servers. If you are worshipping at home, the blessing of the table extends to the bread and cup which you bring to your worship space.

COMMUNION MUSIC

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence
Ahyoung Son, organ

French carol melody

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

At this table, Christ is the host, welcoming all who hunger. At our tables, may Christ be our guest this day and always, that we might welcome hope, peace, joy, and love into our lives, and become hosts to God's presence and people. God of Love, guide us to the stables of our world, where the lonely and longing gather. Lead us to the mangers of our time, where hope and renewal are born again. Make us heralds of your love and joy. Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

UMH 213

BENEDICTION

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in faith so that you overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

Romans 15:13

POSTLUDE

Come, Ye Disconsolate
Ahyoung Son, organ

S. Webbe



*Portions of the Order of Worship are adapted from:
The United Methodist Hymnal, The United Methodist Book of Worship, and The Faith We Sing,
Nashville, TN: The United Methodist Publishing House
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Theme and Image: "A Weary World Rejoices," katebowler.com
Call to Worship: Thom Shuman, lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.ca
Communion Liturgy: Rev. Andrew O'Neill, united-church.ca/worship-theme/advent-unwrapped.ca*



WELCOME! It is a blessing to welcome you to worship today. If you are visiting, please fill out a visitor card, introduce yourself to Pastor Heather or an usher, and check out WestportUMC.org to find out more about the mission and ministries of this community of faith.

ALL ARE INVITED to Fellowship Time in Fellowship Hall following the Worship Service.

THANKS TO THOSE WHO GENEROUSLY DONATED to the Winter Clothing and Turkey Drives for *Light on the Hill Food Pantry* at Summerfield UMC, Bridgeport. All the clothing and food was delivered last Monday. Thanks also to the project coordinators, Kim Weigle (clothing) and Gillian Anderson (turkeys), and to Karol Brumit who encouraged everyone to save up donation money in the *Thanks Giving Savings Jars*.



PERSON TO PERSON TOY DRIVE – Each December, Person to Person (P2P) hosts its Annual Toy Store, a heartwarming event that helps ensure 2,000 children experience the joy of the holiday season. You can support this program by donating a new gift for the Toy Store. Shopping lists with “most needed” items are on the “Giving Tree” in the narthex. Convenient QR codes for the *Amazon Wish List* and *Darien Toy Box* are printed on the shopping list.

Please bring new, unwrapped toys to the church by Sunday, December 8. We will deliver them to Person to Person the following day. Questions? Contact Nancy Everson (njeverson512@gmail.com) or Don Roth (donroth78@gmail.com)



THE COOPERATIVE PARISH CHARGE CONFERENCE will be held at Jesse Lee UMC in Ridgefield on **Sunday, December 8 at 2pm.**



TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24 AT 5:30PM
Come to Christmas Eve Worship –
a service for all ages with Candlelight & Carols

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF WESTPORT AND WESTON

49 WESTON ROAD • WESTPORT, CONNECTICUT 06880

OUR MINISTERS

EVERY PARTICIPANT IN THE LIFE OF OUR CONGREGATION

REV. HEATHER A. M. SINCLAIR, PASTOR

SUSAN GILDER, LAY LEADER

JOHN HODDINOTT, DIRECTOR OF MUSIC & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT • AHYOUNG SON, ORGANIST
STEVEN MAGDA, LIVESTREAM TECHNICIAN • MARILYN SMITH, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

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