

*Second Congregational Church in Wilton,
United Church of Christ
Open and Affirming*

**ORDER OF WORSHIP
Second Sunday of Advent
December 10, 2023**

Welcome to the worship of God at the
Second Congregational Church in Wilton,
United Church of Christ.

We are glad you are here today!

Bold print means congregational participation.
An asterisk (*) indicates to please stand, if you are able.

OUR LIFE TOGETHER
Words of Welcome and Announcements

PRELUDE

***LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE OF PEACE** *responsively*
Advent Family: Jeff and Mary Ellen Gilson

L: Today we light the Advent Candle of Peace.

P: **In a world filled with violence, conflict,
war, and hatred, where there is often no peace,
we prepare to greet the coming One.**

L: We light this candle in the name of Jesus,
the Prince of Peace.

P: **Isaiah said: "His name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty
God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."**

L: Prepare the way of the Lord.
Make straight in the wilderness
a highway for our God!

P: **Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low.**

L: Let us prepare our hearts and homes
to receive the One who comes.

All: **Come, Lord Jesus. Come, Prince of Peace.
We wait and watch for you.**

***GATHERING HYMN**
“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus” No. 153

PRAYER OF THE DAY *unison*

Holy God, you sent John the Baptist to call us to repentance and to prepare the way for the coming of Jesus. Stir up our hearts to prepare the way for Jesus’ birth, that we may be people of peace, who live in joy and serve you always. Amen.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION *unison*
Psalm 51:1-2, 10

Have mercy on us, O God, according to your steadfast love. According to your abundant kindness, forgive us where our thoughts and deeds have hurt others. Lead us in the paths of justice; guide our steps in the paths of peace. Create in us clean hearts, O God, and put a new and right spirit within us, that we may serve you in newness of life. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

PASTORAL PRAYER

SILENT PRAYER

PRAYER RESPONSE

HYMN “Let There Be Peace on Earth” No. 614

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

***DOXOLOGY** (tune: Old Hundredth)

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.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

unison

With these gifts, O God, we seek to accomplish the ministries to which you call us. Guide us to use what we now bring for the well-being of your church, for those in need of shelter, food, or clothing, and for nurturing faith in your people. We pray this in Christ's name. Amen.

ANTHEM

THE WORD OF GOD

The Hebrew Scriptures

Isaiah 40:1-5

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.
A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

The Gospel Reading

Mark 1:1-8

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'" John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

SERMON "The Way of Peace"

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND LORD'S PRAYER

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.

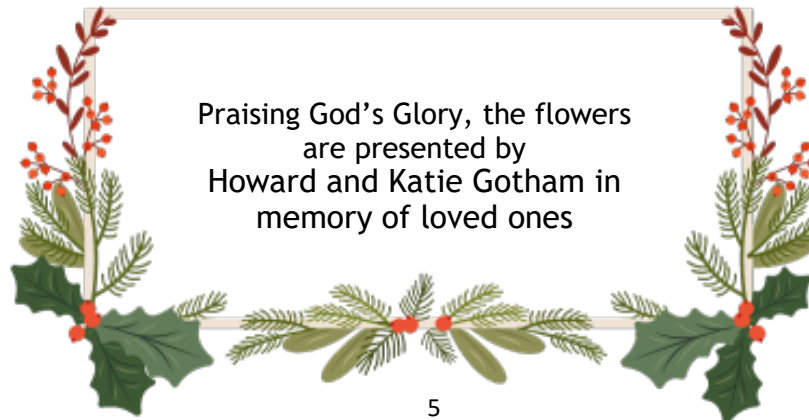
***SENDING HYMN**

"Comfort, Comfort Now My People"

No. 155

***BENEDICTION**

***POSTLUDE**



On The Calendar/Announcements

- Project Linus, December 12, 10:00 am

Gifts of Flowers for 2024
signup sheet on back table

Christmas Cards for attending members and friends
will be due back to the Church on Sunday 12/17
They will be available for pick up on Christmas Eve

Missions will be distributing Holiday Bags on Saturday 12/16
if you can help deliver, please speak with Stephanie or Cindy

Missions is sponsoring a family for Christmas -
speak to a committee member if you'd like to help
with buying a gift or making a donation

BRIDGES Giving Tree

The ornaments on the tree in the link are Christmas wishes for a family receiving support from Bridges, the local women's shelter. If you would like to participate, please take an ornament, purchase the item and return, unwrapped, no later than Sunday, December 17 to the link. If you would prefer to make a cash donation, please see someone on the Missions committee and we will gladly do the shopping for you. Thank you for your support. Becky, Cindy, Dana, Jan and Stephanie

PARTICIPATING IN TODAY'S SERVICE

Rev. Dr. Gary Klingsporn, Pastor
The Gilsons, Liturgists
Patricia Cauchon, Director of Music
Congregation, Ministers to the World

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