



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

ORDER OF WORSHIP
Third Sunday of Advent
December 17, 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 JOY** *responsively*
Philippians 4:4-5; Zephaniah 3:14-17
Our Advent Family: Peter and Stephanie Ouellette

L: Today we light the Advent candle of Joy.

P: **Our Advent waiting and watching are filled
with gladness as we prepare to celebrate the
birth of Jesus.**

L: “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say,
Rejoice. The Lord is near.”

P: **“Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel!
Rejoice and exult with all your heart.”**

L: “The Lord, your God, is in your midst,
and will rejoice over you with gladness.

P: **God will renew you in love;
God will exult over you with loud singing.”**

L: Come, Emmanuel God.
Be Light that guides us to the manger and shines
hope into the world’s forgotten places.

All: **Make us ready to celebrate your birth,
that we may receive you in joy
and serve you always.**

***GATHERING HYMN**

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

No. 154

PRAYER OF THE DAY

unison

God of hope, you strengthen the weak; you care for
the poor; you give hope to those who live in fear.
Fill our hearts with the joy of your saving grace.
Keep us faithful in your service, that our lives may
proclaim your love in all that we say and do. Amen.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

unison

Most merciful God, we have not loved as you have
loved us, nor have we always lived as we ought.
Forgive our sin. Lift us above every past regret and
failure; and give us grace to grow more and more in
your likeness, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

MISSION POSSIBLE COLLECTION

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

PASTORAL PRAYER

SILENT PRAYER

PRAYER RESPONSE

HYMN

“Savior of the Nations, Come”

No. 168

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

Gracious God, during this season when so many gifts are given and received, accept the gifts we now offer. Use them according to your purposes, to bring your renewing, healing, and transforming work to us in this church, to people in our community, and to the world beyond. Amen.

ANTHEM

THE WORD OF GOD

The Gospel Reading

Luke 1:39-56

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

And Mary remained with Elizabeth about three months and then returned to her home.

SERMON

“Can You Sing Mary’s Song?”

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND LORD’S PRAYER unison

Holy God, we thank you for the beauty and power of worship. May your Spirit who has blessed us here, go with us. May we go with the light of hope in our eyes, and your love in our hearts. Praying now the prayer Jesus taught us:

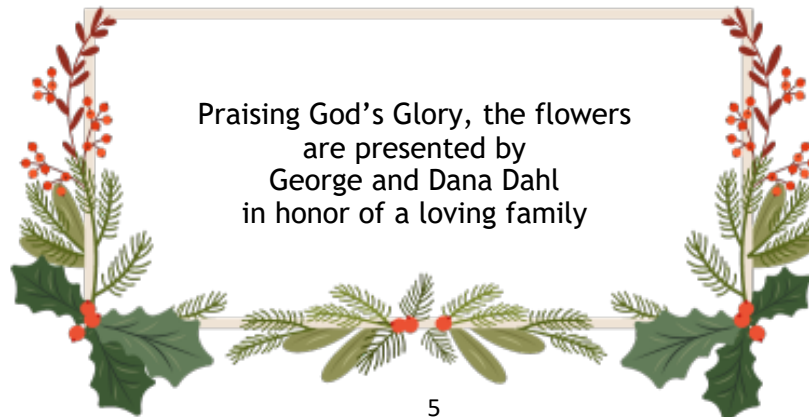
Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

*SENDING HYMN

“For Ages Women Hoped and Prayed” No. 172

*BENEDICTION

*POSTLUDE



On The Calendar/Announcements

- Fidget Blankets, December 19, 9:00 AM
- Council Meeting, December 19. 7:00 PM via Zoom
- Christmas Eve Service, December 24, 7:00 PM
- Church Annual Meeting, January 21, 2024
following worship

Leadership and Committee Reports
are due to Leslie Tuttle by January 1, 2024

Gifts of Flowers for 2024
signup sheet on back table

Scripture Readers for January
Sign up sheet in Parish Hall on bulletin board near coffee

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

UCC Christmas Fund Offering - Sunday, 12/24

The Christmas Fund: caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the UCC, providing emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas "Thank You" gift checks to lower income retirees.

PARTICIPATING IN TODAY'S SERVICE

Rev. Dr. Gary Klingsporn, Pastor
Mary Ellen Gilson, Liturgist
Patricia Cauchon, Director of Music
Congregation, Ministers to the World

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