

Second Congregational Church UCC - Wilton NH

Church Matters

December 2024



It's Time for the Christmas Fair

And just like that, it's here! Saturday, December 7, from 8AM to 2PM, we will be having our annual Christmas Craft Fair.

Featuring

Baked Goods & Foods **Crafts & Gifts**

Decorations **Jewelry**

Lunch! **Penny Sale**

Silent Auction **Wreaths**

Children's Store **and Pictures with Santa!**



Donations can be dropped off on Friday afternoon until about 7PM

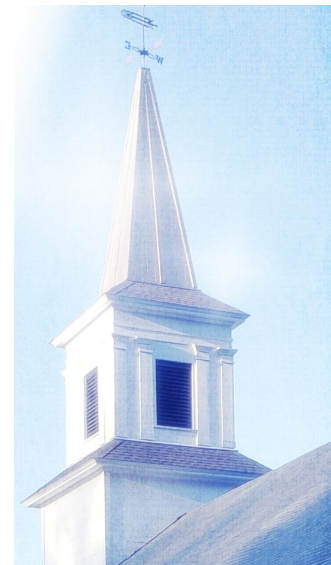
Tell everyone you know to drop by for some great foods

And some unique shopping

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
Of Lessons and Carols 7pm

Poinsettias for Christmas

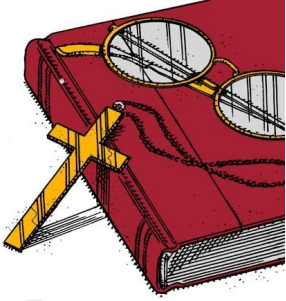
Cindy Broderick is taking orders for Memorial Poinsettias to be placed in the Church. Last day to order is December 15. Choose your color: Red or White. And the size: Small - \$5.99 Medium - \$12.99 Large - \$35.00 The poinsettias will be on display in the church through Christmas and can be taken home after the Christmas Eve Service.



ABOUT SECOND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

- Established in 1823
- The Reverend Gary Klingsporn
Pastor
- Sunday Worship Service 10:00
(Summer services at 9:30)
- Sunday Services are on ZOOM
- Open & Affirming (ONA)
- In partnership with and home of
the Wilton Collaborative Space
- Contact 2ccwilton@gmail.com for
ZOOM information
- www.2ccwilton.org for full
church calendar, weekly sermons
and more
- Follow us on Facebook: Second
Congregational Church Wilton NH

“He’d Come Here”



Let us keep our eyes
on Jesus, the author and
perfecter of our faith.
Hebrews 12:2

“God comes in
unexpected places... and
to unlikely people..”

Housekeeping Notes

Turn off lights and turn down the heat to 60 degrees.

Leave bathroom doors ajar to prevent freezing pipes.

In case of inclement weather, we will advise thru WMUR if we need to cancel in person worship. We will meet via Zoom.

Del, our Administrative Assistant, emails the bulletins and the link to Zoom every Friday. If you are not receiving this email, contact the church by email 2ccwilton@gmail.com or phone 603-654-9045. Provide name and email address and we'll add you to the list. Thank you!

After the Christmas Eve service one year, Harriett Richie's husband announced that he was hungry for breakfast. "There must be some place open," he muttered. So they piled their kids in the car and began driving around, looking for a place to eat. But nothing was open. They headed out onto the interstate and finally found a truck stop, which was almost deserted.

As they got out of the car the only suggestion of Christmas was a single strand of flashing, multi-colored lights strung around the large front window of the truck stop. When they walked in, the jukebox was playing something like, "When You Leave, Walk out Backwards, So I'll Think You're Coming in." The air smelled of coffee, cooking grease, and stale cigarette smoke. At the counter sat a one-armed man in a baseball cap, drinking Pepsi from a bottle.

"We chose a booth beside the window," says Richie. "A thin woman named Rita came to take our order. Old for her years, I guessed. Heavy make-up, hair tucked behind her ears. Rita managed a weary-looking smile as she handed us the menus.

I was feeling out of place in that truck stop. I wondered, *Who are these people?* And what are we doing here on Christmas Eve? Years from now, I thought, we'll laugh and say, "Remember the Christmas we ate breakfast at that truck stop? That awful music and those tacky lights?"

I was staring out the window thinking such thoughts when an old Volkswagon van overloaded with luggage drove up. A bearded young man in jeans got out, walked around and opened the door for a young woman who was holding a tiny baby. They hurried inside and took a booth in the back. As Rita took their order,

the baby started to cry. The father lifted the baby to his shoulder, but it didn't help. Rita poured them coffee. The mother took the baby and began rocking it in her arms, but the baby kept crying.

Then Rita reached over and held out her arms. "Drink your coffee, hon. Let's see what I can do." There was something about the way Rita took that baby that made me think she'd raised half a dozen of her own. Rita began talking, walking, playing with the baby. She took the baby over and showed her to the one-armed man in the baseball cap. He began whistling and making silly faces, and the baby stopped crying! Rita showed her the flashing lights in the window, and she brought her over to us. "Just look at this little darlin'. Mine are so big and grown and gone now," she said.

Meanwhile the one-armed fellow took a pot of coffee from a burner and started waiting on tables. As he finished refilling our mugs, tears came to my eyes. For a long time I sat there watching Rita and the man in the baseball cap. Finally, I said, "He'd come here, wouldn't he?" "Who?" asked my husband. "Jesus. If Jesus were born in this town tonight and the choices were our nice neighborhood, the church, or this truck stop, it would be here, wouldn't it?"

"That's what bothers me," I said. "When we first got here I felt sorry for these people because they probably aren't going home to neighborhoods like ours. And listening to that music on the jukebox, I'll bet nobody here has ever heard of Bach or Handel. But now I think that more than any place I know, this is where Christmas is. He *would* come here, wouldn't he?"¹

(continued on next page)

Planning Committee News



Thank you to everyone that made the Fall Dinner Play a fantastic night out. The actors brought a lot of laughs to an appreciative audience. The pork roast dinner was delicious, Actors, waiters, cooks, thank you all so much!

We turn out sights to the Christmas Fair which is coming up fast. The Fair is Saturday, December 7 from 9am to 2pm. Get your awesome crafts done, plan your baking, and your shopping (at the sale)..

Sign up sheets are in the Link to help set up on Friday and work on Saturday. Or contact Loretta or Ingrid directly.

Loretta Smith and Ingrid Howard, your Planning Committee
ingrid928@comcast.net or lorettaapril@gmail.com.

He'd Come Here, cont'd

Debra and I love this story. It reminds us what the Christmas story is all about. *God comes in unexpected places.* When Jesus was born, when the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, he came not to places of power and privilege, not to Caesar's palace in Rome, nor to Herod's grand temple in Jerusalem, but to a tiny little backwater town in Judea called Bethlehem. Born in a barn, he grew up in Nazareth...far from the dazzling lights of Rome.

And God comes to *unlikely people.* When Jesus was born, when the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, he didn't come to people of power and privilege. He came to ordinary people like you and me. If we're watching and listening, we can experience the joy and mystery of God's presence. "He'd come here, wouldn't he" — into your life and mine this Christmas.

A Blessed Christmas to All,
Pastor Gary & Debra

¹Harriet Richie, "He'd Come Here," *The Christian Century*, December 13, 1995, pp. 1205-06.

I have adapted and shortened the essay for purposes of length.



Book Nook: Kids Choices

There are several books on our library shelves that are for children, or the child in each of us.

Choices include these:

Faith the Cow by Susan Bame Hoover.

My First Book of Prayers illustrated by Lisa M. Gardiner.

365 Read Aloud Bedtime Stories

Check them out to share with your young ones.

Planning Committee

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

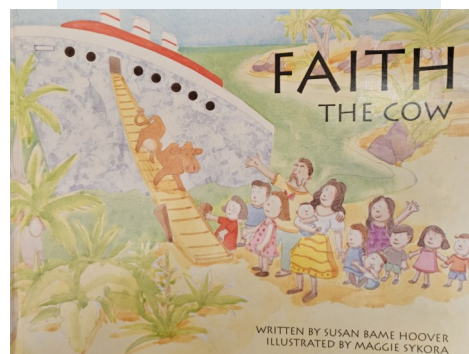
CHRISTMAS FAIR DECEMBER 7 9 TO 2PM

SET UP ON 12/6.

JANUARY We need someone to coordinate game night on January 18. See Ingrid or Loretta.

Note: there will not be a newsletter in January. We are taking the holidays off to enjoy the Season. Church Matters will be back in February. Merry Christmas to all and a Safe and Happy New Year!

~The Editor





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Mission Moment

Twelve years ago in the village of Belel in West Africa, existence was difficult and harsh because there was little water. Crops withered. People spent long hours trying to get enough water to simply keep themselves and their few animals alive. Many perished while young.

Then a group of Christians in the United States heard about the enormous needs of the people of Belel. They bought equipment to dig deep wells. They saw that the equipment was sent to Belel and that deep wells were dug.

Now enough water is available to meet most of the needs of the people. Seeds are planted, crops are being harvested, there is water for bathing and cleaning and drinking to one's content. Hope has blossomed along with the desert

where the crops are planted.

A visitor to Belel was told, "This well has changed our lives permanently. When you see the village today, you know that the money the church gave to dig the well was not lost. It was used wisely and well."

Imagine the gratitude the villagers of Belel have for those who saw to it that they had a life-giving well.

10.99



Musical Notes: A Collaboration Across Time and Place

For Christmas Day worship, many churches use Psalm 98. It is fitting, then, that Isaac Watts, who interpreted 132 psalms as hymn texts, based a now-beloved carol on it.

Watts (1674-1748) was a student of language, religion and philosophy. He wanted to make Scripture more relevant to lay people and thought hymns could help. Watts composed more than 600 hymn texts, many still in use. But Psalm 98:4-9, "Joy to the World," needed music to fit its words.

Enter Lowell Mason (1792-1872), an American choir director. He came across Watts' Psalm 98 hymn text and sought inspiration for a melody from the famous oratorio *Messiah* by George F. Handel (1685-1759). Mason pulled musical phrases from sections of Handel's work, resulting in the tune we now recognize as "Joy to the World."

So it is that three men who lived across three centuries and never met — along with the composer of the original psalm more than two millennia earlier — together produced a hymn to the Christ-child, which millions have sung and continue to love. 12.22

Game Night - January 18, 6 to 8pm

Details coming soon for our next Family Game Night, to be held Saturday, January 18, from 6 to 8pm.

We had about twenty people playing bingo in October. What will we be playing in January?

Contact Becca Lorden if you would like to help with setting up, refreshments, or door prizes.



Annual Meeting January 19, potluck after worship service

Committees—please provide your submissions for the annual report by January 1, 2025. Send them to Leslie Tuttle.

Look Upon Love



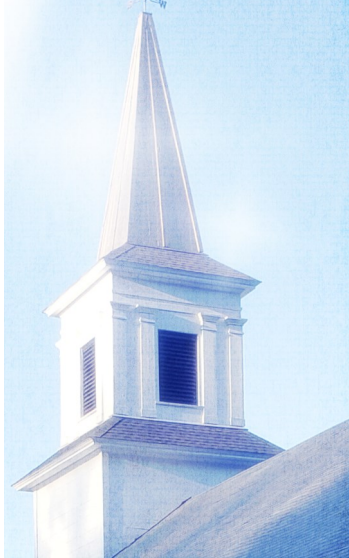
Let us then meditate upon the Nativity just as we see it happening in our own babies. I would not have you contemplate the deity of Christ, the majesty of Christ, but rather his flesh. Look upon the baby Jesus. Divinity may terrify people. Inexpressible majesty will crush them. That is why God took on our human flesh and blood, that God should not terrify us but rather that with love and favor God would console and comfort us.

—Martin Luther 12.24

Common Lectionary Readings from Vanderbilt University

<u>First Sunday of Advent</u> December 1, 2024	<u>Jeremiah 33:14-16</u>	<u>Psalms 25:1-10</u>	<u>1 Thessalonians 3:9-13</u>	<u>Luke 21:25-36</u>
<u>Second Sunday of Advent</u> December 8, 2024	<u>Baruch 5:1-9</u> or <u>Malachi 3:1-4</u>	<u>Luke 1:68-79</u>	<u>Philippians 1:3-11</u>	<u>Luke 3:1-6</u>
<u>Third Sunday of Advent</u> December 15, 2024	<u>Zephaniah 3:14-20</u>	<u>Isaiah 12:2-6</u>	<u>Philippians 4:4-7</u>	<u>Luke 3:7-18</u>
<u>Fourth Sunday of Advent</u> December 22, 2024	<u>Micah 5:2-5a</u>	<u>Luke 1:46b-55</u> or <u>Psalms 80:1-7</u>	<u>Hebrews 10:5-10</u>	<u>Luke 1:39-45, (46-55)</u>
<u>First Sunday after Christmas Day</u> December 29, 2024	<u>1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26</u>	<u>Psalms 148</u>	<u>Colossians 3:12-17</u>	<u>Luke 2:41-52</u>

Second Congregational Church UCC Wilton NH



Each Sunday Church Service 10:00 am in person & zoom

- December 4 Wreath Decorating Workshop 6pm
- December 6 Set up for Christmas Fair 10am
- December 7 CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIR! 9am to 2pm
- December 24 Christmas Candlelight Service of Lessons & Carols
- December 25 Christmas Day
- January 1 New Year's Day
- January 6 Epiphany
- January 18 Game Night 6pm to 8pm
- January 19 Annual Meeting snow date January 26
- February 24 Rummage Sale 9am to 1pm
- March 23 Event TBA

DECEMBER



On the web at 2ccWilton.com

On Facebook: [Second Congregational Church Wilton NH](#)

Second Congregational Church

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Temp Return Service Requested

"It is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas, when its mighty Founder was a child Himself." Charles Dickens
