



The _____
First Congregational Church
_____ of Woodstock _____

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

*December 17th, 2023
The Third Sunday in Advent*

The Order of Morning Worship

December 17th, 2023

The Third Sunday in Advent

Ten-thirty

Welcome & Announcements

Pastor Doug Warren

Prelude & Silent Prayer

The Advent Reading

Heidi Gennaro & Bob Crean

Leader: Now we light three Advent candles. Why?

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.”

Leader: What is the meaning of the third lighted candle?

Family: The third candle is the Priest Candle because Jesus, our promised Messiah, came as the perfect Priest.

Leader: What does a priest do?

Family: God anointed priests as mediators between Himself and humans.

Leader: How did Messiah fulfill all that the priests were to accomplish?

Family: Scripture tells us that Jesus appeared as a “high priest of the good things that have come” and secured our eternal redemption through the sacrifice of His own blood. (Hebrews 9:11-14)

❖ Call to Worship based on Isaiah 9:2 Pastor

❖ Carol #196 *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* Congregation

Scriptural Call to Repentance Habakkuk 2:18-20 Pastor

Prayer of Collective Confession Worship Sourcebook Congregation

Generous God, You give us the greatest gift of all, Yourself,

But we often find it hard to take notice;

We are caught up with our own gifts, given and received.

Forgive us, generous God, for the casual way we treat Your gift of love.

Cast out our sin and enter in, be born in us today.

Silent Reflection and Confession

Proclamation of Forgiveness

Romans 8:1

Pastor

Pastoral Prayer		Pastor
Offering	(collected from back to front)	Congregation
❖ Carol #230	<i>Thou Who Wast Rich beyond All Measure</i>	Congregation
❖ Scripture Reading	Hebrews 9:11-14	Pastor
❖ Carol #213	<i>What Child is This</i>	Congregation
The Sermon	Luke 1:24-25; 39-45	Pastor
	<i>“Elisabeth & Mary’s Christmas Blessings”</i>	
❖ Carol #218	<i>Angels from the Realms of Glory</i>	Congregation
❖ Benediction	2 Corinthians 13:14	Pastor

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

Postlude

~~ Organist: Jonathan Denham ~~
~~ Please ensure cell phones are off ~~
Prelude: Of the Father's Love Begotten (Held)
Offertory: Holy is His Name (Talbot)
Postlude: Joy to the World (Young)

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**Save the Date!**

**Sunday, December 24** — 10:30 am Morning Worship & Christmas Unpageant  
**Sunday, December 24** — 5:00 pm Candlelight Christmas Eve Service

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“Christmas Unpageant”

During the December 24 morning service, all kids as well as kids at heart are invited to join the PreK Sunday School class in a Christmas Unpageant! Join us at **9:45am** on December 24 in the library to select a costume, sit in the back of the church until it’s time, and then move forward to the steps while the Scripture lesson from Luke is read by Pastor Doug. No rehearsals! Just show up! All ages welcome! Speak to Keri Bristow or Robyn Huck for more details.

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

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There will be no Sunday School on December 24 and December 31.

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Advent and Christmas Devotional Booklet

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!

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**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. All ages welcome!

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The December Prayer Letter is available on the back table.

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**Weekly Gathering Opportunities**

**Sundays, 6:00 pm** — Young Adult Fellowship Group in the library

**Tuesdays, 7:00 am** — Middle School & High School Bible Study—meet at Maplefields to grab breakfast, then on to the church for study, discussion, and prayer.

**Tuesdays, 10:00 am** — Ladies' Bible Study meets in person at the Thompson Senior Center and via ZOOM, please contact Bonnie Atwood at (802) 457-4120 or email [bonhope2@gmail.com](mailto:bonhope2@gmail.com).

**Tuesdays, 6:00 pm** — Prayer Meeting, in person in the library and via ZOOM

**Wednesdays, 6:15 am** — Men's Bible Study, in person in the library and via ZOOM, please contact Dick Atwood at (802) 457-4120 or email [rbatwood1@gmail.com](mailto:rbatwood1@gmail.com).

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Sermon Notes
First Congregational Church of Woodstock

Pastor Doug Warren
December 17th, 2023

10:30 Morning Worship Service:

Luke 1:24-25; 39-45

Elisabeth & Mary's Christmas Blessings

1. **Christmas Blessings—*Knowing God's Favor.***

2. **Christmas Blessings—*Being Filled with the Holy Spirit.***

3. **Christmas Blessings—*Growing Faith in Multi-Generational God.***

Please read through the Advent Booklet for Week Three each day this week.