



The \_\_\_\_\_  
First Congregational Church  
of Woodstock \_\_\_\_\_

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

*December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023*



- ❖ Hymn of Response #218      *Angels, from the Realms of Glory*      Congregation
- ❖ Benediction      Numbers 6:24-26      Elder

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

Postlude

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~~ Organist: Jonathan Denham ~~  
 ~~ Please ensure cell phones are off ~~

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**Advent and Christmas Devotional Booklet**

This is our final week of 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 if you don't already have one!

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**The January Prayer Letter is available on the back table.**  
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**Save the Date!**

**Sunday, January 21** — Missionary visit with Ben & Sarah Courtemanche

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**Pastor Doug is Away**

Pastor Doug will be away from December 30-January 13, first on vacation in Maine, and then in California, where he will be taking classes as a part of his Doctor of Ministry program. If you have an emergency, please contact one of the elders below:

- Elder Peter Vanderhoof (Chair): 802-483-9430,      [pdvanderhoof@gmail.com](mailto:pdvanderhoof@gmail.com)
- Elder Tom Johnston:      802-457-3012,      [tajdmd1@gmail.com](mailto:tajdmd1@gmail.com)
- Elder Stephen Briggs:      802-775-8088,      [briggsboat@gmail.com](mailto:briggsboat@gmail.com)

## Guest Speaker: Ernest Shipman

I was born in 1959 & grew up in Atlanta, GA. I was raised in a Christian home and came to faith at age 14. I moved to NH in 1985 to get married. I have been married to Wendy since 1986. We have two adult children: Sam, who lives in Chattanooga, and Emma, who is married & lives near us.

I have two other connections to the church! In the mid 1990's, Wendy's sister took a job at Dartmouth Hospital and she attended the church. We used to visit her often and Sunday mornings were always a treat. We got to be friends of the Koops as well. I am an ordained ruling elder in the Presbyterian Church in America, and I am friends with Pastor Warren as he and I are both members of the same presbytery.

In addition to being a ruling elder (and a member of Exeter Presbyterian church), I have been called to preach and have been licensed by the Presbytery. I do pulpit supply and preach as I am needed. To help facilitate this calling I have joined the staff of Reformed Evangelistic Fellowship as a missionary, non-ordained evangelistic worker. My passion is preaching the Gospel and doing one-on-one discipleship. I also recently published a book on discipleship for adults using the Westminster Shorter Catechism.

When not in ministry, Wendy & I have a mini farm (really a former blueberry farm) in New Durham, NH. I am now retired from the business world, having been self-employed since 1991. I recently sold both of my businesses: I used to own a commercial sign shop (my wife is very artistic), and I used to also own a small retail firearms store.

God has been very faithful to us!

My life verse is:

*Only fear the Lord and serve him faithfully with all your heart. For consider what great things he has done for you. 1st Samuel 12:24*

## **A Kingdom of Priests**

1. A ***“Kingdom of Priests”*** to the Church (Exodus 19:3-8)

2. A ***“Kingdom of Priests”*** to the World (1 Peter 2:9)

3. A ***“Kingdom of Priests”*** to God (Revelation 1:6)

CONCLUSION: God has always intended for His people to serve and glorify Him. We are not meant for a life of ease and comfort but service to each other and to God. Will we obey God in this command? Will we commit ourselves wholeheartedly to each other? Will we commit to lovingly take Christ to the nations? Will we commit to bringing all glory to God? God wants us to understand: *“We love because He first loved us” 1 John 4:19*. Our calling is to serve. Our motivation is to be like Christ. Our goal is to glorify God!