

The Congregational Church of Salisbury

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



PRELUDE

“Pastoral Symphony” from *Messiah*

G.F. Handel

WELCOME

✧ HYMN #87

“Comfort, Comfort Now My People”
verses 1 & 2

GENEVAN 42

(✧ *The congregation may rise, in body or in spirit.*)

ANNOUNCEMENTS | JOYS AND CONCERNS | SILENT PRAYER

THE ADVENT WREATH (based on Isaiah 11:1-10)

Susie Mieras and Deb Moore

ONE: Friends, I dreamt a new shoot was growing
from the stump we thought was long dead.

**ALL: We dreamt too — of cows and bears grazing next
to one another in the field.**

In my dream there was a toddler laughing in wonder and
without fear at the world around her.

**In our dreams, the wolf and the lamb found shelter together in a barn;
the leopard and the goat curled up next to one another in the hay.**

Did you dream too of generosity and compassion clothing all people like a soft robe?

**Yes, and all people recognized the evils of inequity
and worked together for restoration.**

Let us not shy away from our dreams but seek God through them.

[1st & 2nd Advent candles are lit]

RESPONSE IN SONG

“Light the Candles”



1. Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness. Mes-
2. Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness. Mes-



-si - ah shall bring new hope to the peo - ple: God ful - fills the prom - ise.
-si - ah shall feed the flock like a shep-herd, gent - ly lead them home-ward.

*TEXT: Wayne L. Wold, 1984, adapt. MUSIC: Yiddish folk song, arr. Wayne L. Wold, 1984.
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A PRAYER OF RECONCILIATION

ONE: Holy God, Maker of all:

ALL: Have mercy on us.

Jesus Christ, Servant of the poor:

Have mercy on us.

Holy Spirit, Breath of life:

Have mercy on us.

Let us in silence confess our faults and admit our frailty.

(Prayer in silence)

Before God, with the people of God, I confess to my brokenness:

to the ways I wound my life, the lives of others, and the life of the world.

**May God forgive you, Christ renew you,
and the Spirit enable you to grow in love.**

Amen.

**Before God, with the people of God, we confess to our brokenness:
to the ways we wound our lives, the lives of others,
and the life of the world.**

May God forgive you, Christ renew you, and the Spirit enable you to grow in love.

Amen.

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

With the whole church,

**We remember that we are forgiven by God,
befriended by Christ, empowered by the Spirit.**

With people everywhere,

**We affirm God's goodness at the heart of humanity,
planted more deeply than all that is wrong.**

With all creation,

We celebrate the miracle and wonder of life: the unfolding purposes of God, at work in ourselves and the world. Thanks be to God!

RESPONSE IN SONG

“Until Jesus Comes”

Un-til Je-sus comes, un-til Je-sus comes, I'll be watch-ing and
wait-ing un-til Je-sus comes. Un-til Je-sus comes, un-til Je-sus
comes, I'll be watch-ing and wait-ing un-til Je - sus comes.

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OFFERTORY

THE LIGHT OF SERVICE Offerings not specifically designated for the Church (including checks with “Light of Service” or “LOS” in the memo) will be given to an organization doing work that complements our church’s mission. This week, we share our gifts with the UCC’s **Christmas Fund for Veterans of the Cross**.

ONE: God has poured gifts into our lives; we now return our tithes and offerings.

**ALL: Let us gather our gifts with grateful praise,
and offer them to God’s purposes.**

RECEIVING OUR OFFERINGS

Our church welcomes every size gift, and thanks you for your generosity.

ANTHEM

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

arr. Howard Helvey

*Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming
from tender stem hath sprung!*

*Of Jesse's lineage coming,
as those of old have sung.
It came, a blossom bright,
amid the cold of winter,
when half-gone was the night.*

*Isaiah 'twas foretold it,
the Rose I have in mind:
with Mary we behold it,
the Virgin Mother kind.
To show God's love aright,
she bore to us a Savior
when half-spent was the night.*

*O Flower, whose fragrance tender
with sweetness fills the air,
dispel in glorious splendor
the darkness everywhere:
True man, yet very God,
from death now save us,
and share our every load.*

✠ **DOXOLOGY**

OLD 100TH

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
praise Christ, all people here below;
praise Holy Spirit ever more;
One God of grace, whom we adore! Amen.**

✠ **UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**God of Peace, we pray that these offerings may be touched by your
grace. We pray that through them, we may participate in sending the
light of peace to those who live within the world's trouble. Use us,
God, and use our gifts to brighten those who are outcast, to enlighten
those seeking comfort, to energize those building *shalom*. We ask it in
Jesus' name: Amen.**

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Romans 15:4-13
Isaiah 11:1-10

*New Testament, p. 199
Old Testament, p. 784*

SERMON

“If You Imagine ...”

Pastor John A. Nelson

PASTORAL PRAYER

✠ **HYMN** (insert)

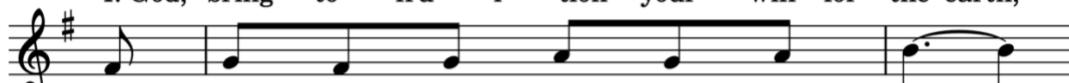
“Isaiah the Prophet”

JUDAS AND MARY

Isaiah the Prophet Has Written of Old



1. I - sa - iah the proph - et has writ - ten of old
2. The moun - tains and hills shall break forth in - to song,
3. Yet na - tions still prey on the meek of the world,
4. God, bring to fru - i - tion your will for the earth,



how God's new cre - a - tion shall come.
the peo - ples be led forth in peace;
and con - flict turns par - ent from child.
that no one shall hurt or de - stroy,



In - stead of the thorn tree, the fir tree shall grow;
The earth shall be filled with the knowl - edge of God
Your peo - ple de - spoil all the sweet - ness of earth;
That wis - dom and jus - tice shall reign in the land



the wolf shall lie down with the lamb, the lamb,
as the wa - ters cov - er the sea, the sea,
the brier and the thorn tree grow wild, grow wild,
and your peo - ple shall go forth in joy, in joy,



the wolf shall lie down with the lamb.
as the wa - ters cov - er the sea.
the brier and the thorn tree grow wild.
your peo - ple shall go forth in joy.

WORDS: *Joy Patterson*

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MUSIC: JUDAS AND MARY

Sydney Carter, 1964

We Feast at God's Table

INVITATION

GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

May the God of Advent be with you!

And also with you!

Now is the time to offer our hearts to God.

We lift them to the One who fills them with grace.

Here at the Table, God is closer to us than ever before.

We would sing glad praise to the One who is our peace.

You saw beyond seeing, God of wonder and joy ...

...

So with those who, in every time and place,

were glad to go to your sanctuary, we sing your praises:

Holy, holy, holy are you, God who draws near.

All creation prays for your peace.

Hosanna in the highest!

Blessed is the One who comes when we least expect.

Hosanna in the highest!

You come to us in this season, God of holiness and hope ...

...

As we begin our Advent journey, as we prepare to celebrate the Birth,
we are in the presence of Mystery:

Christ came, becoming flesh for us;

Christ died, surpassing death for us;

Christ rose, bearing new life for us;

Christ will come to bring us into eternity.

We stand at the gates of your heart giving thanks....

THE LORD'S PRAYER (*debts/debtors*)

Hymnal, p. 35

RESPONSE IN SONG (*p. 3*)

“Until Jesus Comes”

SHARING THE BREAD AND THE CUP

We celebrate an open communion and welcome every person to the table. We understand the sharing of the bread and the cup in Jesus' name to be a reenactment of an ancient vision of God's feast for all people. We don't require you to be a member of our church, or any church, to participate with us in this feast of grace: all that is needed is that you desire God's nurture. (We use gluten-free bread and unfermented grape juice in an effort to remove barriers to anyone's participation in the sacrament.)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God of new beginnings, you draw near to us in word and sacrament to strengthen and renew us. Kindle in us the fire of your Spirit. May your light so shine through us that all may know we are living in the light of your peace. We ask this in the name of Jesus, God-with-us; Amen.

✠ **HYMN #94**

“Now the Heavens Start to Whisper”

JEFFERSON

BENEDICTION and **SUNG AMEN**

POSTLUDE

Quand le Sauveur Jesus Christ ou Bon Joseph, écoutez moi

Jean-Francois Dandrieu



Welcome to Church!

Gathered in 1744, the Congregational Church of Salisbury is an Open and Affirming member of the United Church of Christ, in a “net zero” building powered by clean energy. Our church is also a home to people from a great variety of church backgrounds and life experiences. Your presence is a gift to us! We hope you will feel God's Spirit here today through our worship and fellowship.

If you are visiting us, Welcome! Please sign our guest book and introduce yourself to our Pastor or to one of the Deacons. Fill out a welcome card in the pew to join our email list.

Today's Worship Leaders

Ushers: Deborah Moore & Joanne Taber • *Deacon:* Pat Palmer • *Reader:* Don Mayland
Communion servers: Pat Palmer & Myra Brandt • *Fellowship hosts:* Parker and Ron Collins

Today's liturgy is adapted and reprinted from *Lectionary Liturgies* by the Rev. Thom Shuman © 2025
(lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com); used by permission.

Our Ministry Team

Ministers: All Participants in the Life of the Congregation

Music Director: David Baranowski

Bell Choir Director: Mary Davidson

Sunday School Coordinator: Holly Tierney

Sunday School Assistant: Stephanie Tierney

Youth Group Leader: Dan Baker

Youth Group Assistant: Sarah Lesch

Church Administrator: Catherine Chatham

Sexton: Richard Tietjen

Church Officers: Charlie Noyes, *moderator*;
Janet Offensend, *treasurer*; Liz Wing, *clerk*

Pastor and Teacher: The Rev. Dr. John A. Nelson

This Week at Salisbury UCC

SUNDAY, 7 DECEMBER

10AM Worship, Sunday School, and Youth
Group, *followed by fellowship &
refreshments in the Parish Hall*
11:30AM Church Council meeting

MONDAY, 8 DECEMBER

11:30AM Duplicate Bridge Club

WEDNESDAY, 10 DECEMBER

9:15AM Centering Prayer (via Zoom)
12:15PM Staff meeting
2:30PM Board of Deacons meeting
4PM Women's Bible study

THURSDAY, 11 DECEMBER

11:30AM Duplicate Bridge Club
5PM Handbell Choir rehearsal
6PM Choir rehearsal

FRIDAY, 12 DECEMBER

11:30AM Duplicate Bridge Club
8:45AM Men's Bible study

SUNDAY, 14 DECEMBER

10AM Worship and Sunday School
11:30AM Music Committee meeting



The Congregational Church of Salisbury

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Meeting in Grace • Transformed by Love • Serving with Joy

30 Main Street | P.O. Box 392 | Salisbury, CT 06068 • 860-435-2442

email: welcome@salisburyucc.org • *web:* salisburyucc.org

Office Hours: 8:30am – 1:30pm • Monday, Tuesday, Friday