

The Congregational Church of Salisbury

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



PRELUDE

WELCOME

✘ **HYMN #127**

“Jesus, the Light of the World”

WE’LL WALK IN THE LIGHT

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS | JOYS AND CONCERNS | SILENT PRAYER

CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: We gather wondering, “Where will we find the Babe born in Bethlehem?”

**MANY: We will find the Babe in the laughter of children,
in the wisdom of grandparents.**

We gather asking, “Where will we find the Child of Christmas?”

**We will find the Child where the needy are gifted with hope,
where the oppressed are set free.**

We gather wanting to know, “Where will we find the Christ who has come for us?”

**We will find our Hope where fear is overwhelmed by grace,
where hatred is overwhelmed by love,
where all people are overwhelmed by joy.**

RESPONSE IN SONG

“Walk in the Light”

We’ll walk in the light, beautiful light.

Come where the dewdrops of mercy shine bright.

Oh, shine all around us by day and by light.

Jesus, the light of the world.

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, forever at work in ourselves and the world.
Thanks be to God!**

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

Hymnal, p. 35

RESPONSE IN SONG

“Walk in the Light”

**We'll walk in the light, beautiful light.
Come where the dewdrops of mercy shine bright.
Oh, shine all around us by day and by light.
Jesus, the light of the world.**

OFFERTORY

THE LIGHT OF SERVICE

*Offerings not specifically designated for the Church (including any checks with “Light of Service” or “LOS” in the memo line) will be given to an organization doing compassionate work that complements our church’s mission. This week, we share our gifts with the **Caron Treatment Center**.*

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

✠ EPIPHANY BLESSING

GREENSLEEVES

**Bring gifts of wonder, awe, and praise;
come join in jubilation;
The Holy Child, by love and grace,
has come with God’s salvation.
Raise, raise a song on high,
the mother sings her lullaby.
Joy, joy for Christ is born,
the babe, the child of Mary.**

✠ UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

We do not have frankincense or myrrh to offer, but we do give our tangible gifts — in hopes that the lives of the poor might be touched, that refugees like the Holy Family might be welcomed everywhere, and that those searching might find a community with us. In Jesus' name, we pray: Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Isaiah 9:2b-7
Matthew 2:1-12

Testament, p. 780
New Testament, p. 2

SERMON

“Home by Another Road” The Rev. Dr. Betsey Mauro

PASTORAL PRAYER

✕ **HYMN #158**

“Born in the Night, Mary’s Child”

MARY’S CHILD

We Feast at God’s Table

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

ONE: We have come asking for the child –

**ALL: Wondering where that love might be born,
Seeking that joy that might satisfy our thirst,
Wandering through the darkness of so many mistakes.**

We have come to this place where sages from the east and shepherds from the hills and animal witnesses met around a young mother and her newborn. We have come to this place called Bethlehem –

**to this place where our hearts rise like yeast;
to this place where we meet our newborn hope;
to this place where we taste our deepest joy.**

In Bethlehem, where we assumed the worst,
imagining that no good can come,
we somehow missed its name.

Bethlehem: *Bethel* meaning house; *Lehem* meaning bread.

**There is something here that will satisfy our hunger.
No matter how long we have wandered,
here our hearts arise. Our light has come.**

In this bread and in this cup,
we celebrate something we can’t quite understand.

**Because God has made a house at this table.
Because God satisfies our hunger in the most unlikely places.
Because God comes to be with us, now and always.**

It is with this expectation that we come to the table
to taste and see that God is here.

REMEMBERING JESUS AT THE TABLE

PRAYER AT THE TABLE

**Holy Spirit, come into this bread and this cup.
Transform these ordinary objects as you change our hearts
to shape and form your world with the joy you promise.
Pour your grace upon us, so we overflow with your love.
Help us to remember how a newborn baby might grow into
a little child that would one day turn to his hope-filled friends
in an upper room, and open to them a new union with God.**

SHARING THE MEAL

*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 the nurture God is offering.*

*As communion is served we hold the bread until all have received, to signify our unity in
Christ. We drink the cup as we are served, to signify our personal relationship with Christ.
(We use gluten-free bread and unfermented grape juice, to extend a wider welcome.)*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

ONE: Eternal and gracious One, though we live in a world of need,

**ALL: here we have tasted your goodness
and been fed by your vision of fullness of life for all creation.**

Though afflicted by brokenness and division,

here we have heard your call to live as a Beloved Community.

Though daily we touch our limits,

here we have received the abundance of your grace.

You have filled us, O God:

inspire us to live in love and to share your *shalom!* Amen.

✠ HYMN

“Guiding Star”

DIVINUM MYSTERIUM



1. Christ we search for you with long - ing, but we need not tra -
 2. So we bring our gifts to ho-nor you, and we come on bend -
 3. Christ, you are the star that guides us; your love is the way—



-vel far. In the dark-ness shines a my - ster - y; in the
 -ed knee, of - fer - ing our hearts and liv - ing, that to
 we know. Keep us faith - ful in our seek - ing: may we



night a ra - di - ant star. For your love ap - pears be -
 you the glo - ry be. May your light a - dorn and
 take the path— you show. May the light of your love



-fore _____ us, gleam - ing right— where we are,
 guide _____ us, now and in e - ter - ni - ty,
 shine _____ in us, here and ev - ery - where we go,



ev - er - more and ev - er - more. _____ A - men. _____

TEXT: Steve Garnaas-Holmes
 MUSIC: Plainsong, Mode V

DIVINUM MYSTERIUM
 8.7.8.7.8.7.7

BENEDICTION and SUNG AMEN

POSTLUDE



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 welcoming 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.

*We seek to love God with all our hearts, souls, and minds and love our neighbors as ourselves. This Church is **Open** to all for participation, membership, leadership and employment regardless of race, ancestry, class, gender identity, physical and mental ability or sexual orientation. We **Affirm** each individual as a child of God, celebrating the total identity of each person.*

*As an **Open and Affirming** Congregation, we commit to work toward ending ignorance, fear, hatred, prejudice, and discrimination against any person.*

Whoever you are, wherever you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here!

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.

Kindly set phones to silent (unless you’re expecting a call from Jesus).

Today’s Worship Leaders

*Reader: Karin Noyes • Deacon: Don Mayland
Communion servers: Don Mayland & Pat Palmer*

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



Please Recycle this Bulletin!



Our Ministry Team

Ministers: All Participants in the Life of the Congregation

Worship & Music

Music Director: David Baranowski
Bell Choir Director: Mary Davidson

Faith Formation

Sunday School Coordinator: Holly Tierney
Sunday School Assistant: Stephanie Tierney
Youth Group Leader: Dan Baker
Youth Group Assistant: Sarah Lesch

Holding the Parts Together

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, 4 JANUARY

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

MONDAY, 5 JANUARY

11:30AM Duplicate Bridge Club

TUESDAY, 6 JANUARY

4PM Board of Christian Action meeting

WEDNESDAY, 7 JANUARY

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

THURSDAY, 8 JANUARY

11:30AM Duplicate Bridge Club
4:30PM Prayer Shawl ministry
5:30PM Choir rehearsal

FRIDAY, 9 JANUARY

8:45AM Men's Bible study

SUNDAY, 11 JANUARY

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



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UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Meeting in Grace • Transformed by Love • Serving with Joy

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