



SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP
with UCC Westerly

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 1, 2024 @ 9:45am

In-person &

Broadcast live from our sanctuary

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Photo credit: Stock image Microsoft Word

PASTOR'S WELCOME

Gathering Music –

[WORDS & MUSIC: Doug Brummund, ©2022 B.R. Music. All rights reserved. Used with permission.]

DEACON'S WELCOME

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

<https://www.lovetoknow.com/celebrations/christmas/christmas-wreath-meaning>

Voice 1: Each part of the Christmas Advent Wreath has meaning. It is a circle to symbolize the eternal and abiding presence of God, with no beginning and no end. It is also a reminder of the cycle of seasons, from winter to spring to fall and back to winter once more. This in turn symbolizes the way in which life renews itself as well as the eternal life possible through Jesus Christ.

Voice 2: Advent wreaths are usually an evergreen circle with four colored candles and one white candle in the center. The colored candles can be any color but usually there are three purple and one pink. In general the colored candles represent reverence, prayer and joy. The center white candle is the Christ Candle symbolizing the virgin birth of the infant Jesus.

Voice 1: Each of the four candles whatever their color represents a week in the season of Advent, a season of spiritual preparation for the coming of the Christ Child on Christ. Other colors of Advent candles can include blue which represents hope and symbolizes Jesus being from the royal line of David. Red candles are symbolic of the sacrament of Communion and religious unity. Green candles represent faith and the spiritual life. Gold candles represent love and kingship.

Voice 2: O God, through this Advent wreath created so lovingly for this congregation may we be open to the personal experience it provides as insight into our faith. May we understand more clearly our beliefs and our values during this Advent season so that we recognize those moments that are over-commercialized, obscuring the birth of the Son of God as new light and hope for the world. Amen.

The 1st candle is lit.

All: We light the first candle of the Advent wreath to celebrate the wreath itself as the starting point of our preparations for Christmas, tangibly and spiritually. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness does not overcome it.

OPENING HYMN – Sanctuary

W&R#482

[WORDS & MUSIC: John Thompson & Randy Scruggs. ©1982 Whole Armor Music (Admin. The Kruger Organization)]

A CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Note: Ours is an Open Table meaning that anyone who finds meaning in the sacrament is welcome to partake. Do note that our elements are gluten and alcohol free.

An Affirmation of Faith – The Statement of Faith of the United Church of Christ

We believe in you, O God, eternal spirit, God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God, and to your deeds we testify:

You call the worlds into being, create persons in your own image, and set before each one the ways of life and death.

You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

You judge people and nations by your righteous will declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Savior, you have come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to yourself.

You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues and races.

You call us into your church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be your servants in the service of others, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.

You promise to all who trust you forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, your presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in your realm which has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you. Amen.

Song of Preparation – *Let Us Break Bread Together*

W&R#699, v. 1

[© Public Domain]

Words of Invitation, Explanation and Consecration

Partaking in the bread and cup together

Prayer of Thanksgiving: **Bountiful God, we give you thanks that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us the presence of Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

THE MORNING MESSAGE –

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 9:6-7

Message – *A Lived Experience of the Joy, Hope, Peace and Love of Christmas as we decorate our sanctuary together*

#A MOMENT TO BREATHE

A TIME OF PRAYER

Pastoral Prayers & Silent Prayer

The Lord's Prayer in whatever words are most comfortable for you.

Musical Response

OUR RESPONSE TO GOD

OFFERTORY ANTHEM -

Acknowledgement of Gifts & Offerings*

Doxology: [©Public Domain]

“Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Christ all creatures here below; Praise Holy Spirit, Comforter; One God, Triune, whom we adore. Amen.”

CLOSING HYMN – *This Little Light of Mine*

[©Public Domain]

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine (3 x)
Let it shine (3 x)

See the light spreading round the world, I'm gonna let it shine (3X)
Let it shine (3X)

Won't let anyone blow it out, I'm gonna let it shine (3X)
Let it shine (3X)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A PRAYER OF BENEDICTION [from *The New Century Hymnal*. ©1995 *The Pilgrim Press*]

May you love God so much that you love nothing else too much; May you trust God so much that you need fear nothing else at all. Amen.

Sung Response – Let There Be Peace on Earth

W& R#614

[WORDS & MUSIC: Sy Miller & Jill Jackson, © 1955, Ren.1983 Jen-Lee Music. Used by Permission. CCLI Copyright License 21022161]

PASSING OF THE PEACE

POSTLUDE – *The joyful sounds of God's beloved people! Please join us in Fellowship Hall as we write out some Christmas cards for folks not able to join us regularly.*

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**#A MOMENT TO BREATHE** is an experience of Thich Nhat Hahn's breath of 10 exercise. It is very simple, inviting you to breathe as you normally would but counting each breath in and each breath out until you reach 10. If you lose track of your count at any point, start over. This is a remarkably simple but highly effective breathing exercise that calms your mind and heart. Enjoy! 😊

**TO ANY VISITORS WITH US THIS MORNING, WELCOME!** We are so glad you decided to join us! We would love to be able to connect with you after your visit today. If you are comfortable doing so, please find one of our *CONTACT* cards in the back of the sanctuary to fill out and leave in one of the offering plates. We also hope you will join us for fellowship time if you are so inclined!

**Our Diaconate Person of the Week for this week is Lynn Murray.** Please feel free to be in touch with her with your joys and concerns knowing that we care about you every day.

**\*ABOUT THE OFFERING.** *We offer our deepest gratitude to our members and friends who are so generous with their pledges and financial gifts to the church, both those here in person and those joining online. Online participants are invited to give online via our "Donate" button @ [www.uccwesterly.org](http://www.uccwesterly.org) or mail your checks, made payable to UCC Westerly, to us at 9 Castle Hill Road, Pawcatuck, CT 06379. A REMINDER that offering plates are located at each entrance to the sanctuary. Thank you! *As always on Communion Sundays we are also receiving donations for the Deacons Fund used to address urgent needs in our congregation and the community.**

**THE PRAYER MINISTRIES** of this church are many and varied and you are welcome to participate in any or all of them. In the sanctuary, you will find prayer notebooks by either door within which to write specific prayer requests for Sunday. You will also find prayer candle tables at which you may light a candle for your own prayer concerns. You will also find in the front pews prayer shawls

and prayer bears to offer comfort to those struggling. For more information on our prayer ministries please speak with any Deacon or Rev. Ruth at any time.

*You are welcome to donate flowers for the chancel any week. Our sign-up sheet is located on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall or speak with Rev. Ruth for more information.*

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**ISAIAH 9:6-7**

**For a child has been born for us,  
a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders;  
and he is named  
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
His authority shall grow continually,  
and there shall be endless peace  
for the throne of David and his kingdom.  
He will establish and uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time onwards and for evermore.  
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.**

*To request a copy of today's message be sent to you, kindly contact Jerin in the office (860)599-1226 or [uccwesterly@gmail.com](mailto:uccwesterly@gmail.com).*

THE UNITED CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WESTERLY, UCC  
9 Castle Hill Road, Pawcatuck, CT 06379  
860-599-1226 <> email: [uccwesterly@gmail.com](mailto:uccwesterly@gmail.com)  
[www.uccwesterly.org](http://www.uccwesterly.org) <> <https://www.facebook.com/UCCwesterly>

OUR STAFF:

The Rev. Ruth Shilling Hainsworth, Pastor  
David Cranmer, Organist & Choirs Director  
Jerin Peloquin, Office Assistant