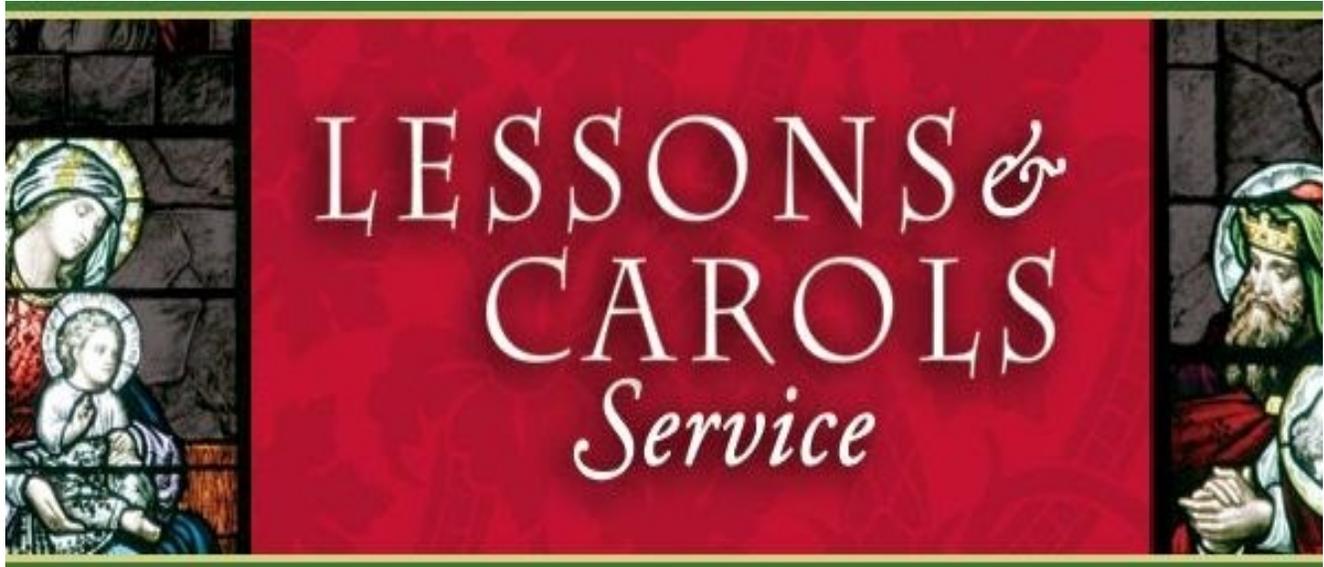




First United Methodist Church

"Come as you are, we mean it!"



Sunday, December 26, 2021



WELCOME TO WORSHIP



WELCOME

PRAYER

CAROL

“What Child is This?”

What Child is this, who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?

Chorus:

This, this is Christ, the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels
sing:

Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
The Babe, the Son of Mary!

Why lies He in such mean estate,
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear: for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading. [Chorus]

PRAYER TIME

Sharing of Prayers, Joys and Concerns

Special Music

Cathy Haringa, Patti Coffill, and Toosdhi Berry

Pastoral prayer

The Lord's Prayer

PASSING OF THE PEACE

FIRST LESSON:

Adam and Eve rebel against God

Genesis 3:1-15

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God say, ‘You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?’” The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in

the garden; but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.’” But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves. They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, “Where are you?” He said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.” He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate.”

Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent tricked me, and I ate.”

CAROL

“Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming”

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming
 From tender stem hath sprung!
 Of Jesse's lineage coming
 As men of old have sung.
 It came, a flower bright,
 Amid the cold of winter
 When half-gone was the night.

To show God's love aright
 She bore to men a Savior
 When half-spent was the night.

To show God's love aright
 She bore to men a Savior
 When half-spent was the night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it,
 The Rose I have in mind:
 With Mary we behold it,
 The virgin mother kind.

SECOND LESSON:

God calls on his people to prepare for redemption Isaiah 40:1-11

Comfort, O comfort my people,
 says your God.
 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
 and cry to her

that she has served her term,
 that her penalty is paid,
 that she has received from the Lord's hand
 double for all her sins.

A voice cries out:

'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,
 make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Every valley shall be lifted up,
 and every mountain and hill be made low;
 the uneven ground shall become level,
 and the rough places a plain.

O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,
 lift it up, do not fear;

O Zion, herald of good tidings;
 lift up your voice with strength,
 say to the cities of Judah,
 'Here is your God!'

See, the Lord God comes with might,
 and his arm rules for him;
 his reward is with him,
 and his recompense before him.

He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
 he will gather the lambs in his arms,
 and carry them in his bosom,
 and gently lead the mother sheep.

CAROL

"He is Born" (traditional French Carol)

Refrain:

He is born, the divine Christ Child;
 play the oboe and bagpipes
 merrily!

He is born, the divine Christ Child;
 sing we all of the Savior mild.

Jesus, Lord of all the world,
 coming as a Child among us;
 Jesus, Lord of all the world,
 grant to us Thy heavenly peace.

[Refrain]

Through long ages of the past,
 prophets have foretold His coming;
 through long ages of the past,
 now the time has come at last! [Refrain]

THIRD LESSON:

The Savior will be born in Bethlehem

Micah 5:2-4

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,
 who are one of the little clans of Judah,
 from you shall come forth for me
 one who is to rule in Israel,
 whose origin is from of old,
 from ancient days.

Therefore he shall give them up until the time
 when she who is in labor has brought forth;
 then the rest of his kindred shall return
 to the people of Israel.

And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord,
 in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.

And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great
 to the ends of the earth

CAROL**“O Little Town of Bethlehem”**

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
 Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
 Yet in thy dark streets shineth, the everlasting Light;
 The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary and gathered all above
 While mortals sleep, the angels keep
 Their watch of wond’ring love.

O morning stars together proclaim the holy birth
 And praise sing to God the King
 And peace to men on earth.

How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is giv’n
 So God imparts to human hearts
 The blessing of his heav’n.

No ear may hear is coming but in this world of sin,
 Where meek souls will receive him still
 The dear Christ enter in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
 Cast out our sin and enter in, be born in us today.
 We hear the Christmas angels, the great glad tidings tell;
 O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!

FOURTH LESSON:

The angel appears to Mary Luke 1:26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one. The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called the Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son: and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

CAROL

"Hark the Herald Angels Sing"

Hark! The herald angels sing: glory to the newborn King!
 Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!
 Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies;
 With the angelic host proclaim: Christ is born in Bethlehem! (Refrain)
 Hark! The herald angels sing: glory to the newborn King!

Christ, by highest heaven adored; Christ, the everlasting Lord;
 Late in time behold him come, off-spring of the Virgin's womb.
 Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail the incarnate Deity.
 Pleased as man with us to dwell; Jesus, our Emmanuel! (Refrain)

FIFTH LESSON:

Jesus is born at Bethlehem

Luke 2:1-20

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah,* the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.’ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

‘Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!’

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.’ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

CAROL

“Good Christian Friends Rejoice”

Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
give ye heed to what we say:
News! News! Jesus Christ was born today.

Good Christian friends, rejoice
 with heart and soul and voice;
 now ye need not fear the grave:
 News! News! Jesus Christ was born to save!
 Calls you one and calls you all
 to gain his everlasting hall.
 Christ was born to save!
 Christ was born to save!

SIXTH LESSON:

Matthew tells of the coming of Jesus Matthew 1:18-25

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.' All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
 and they shall name him Emmanuel',
 which means, 'God is with us.'

When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

CAROL

“It Came Upon a Midnight Clear”

It came upon a midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
 From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
 “Peace on the earth, good will to men, from heaven’s all gracious King.”
 The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled,
 And still their heavenly music floats o’er all the weary world:
 Above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wings,
 And ever o’er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.

SEVENTH LESSON:

Wise men from the East worship Jesus

Matthew 2:1-12

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, ‘Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.’ When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah* was to be born. They told him, ‘In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

“And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.” ’

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, ‘Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.’ When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage.

Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

CAROL**“We Three Kings of Orient Are”**

We three kings of Orient are, bearing gifts we traverse afar,
Field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.

Refrain

O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright;
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!

EIGHTH LESSON:

The Word was made flesh

John 1:1-18

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, 'This was he of whom I said, "He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me."') From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

CAROL AND OFFERTORY

“Joy To The World”

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
 Let earth receive her King!
 Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room,
 and heav'n and nature sing,
 and heav'n and nature sing,
 and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

OFFERING PRAYER

All: Glorious God, we sing with the angels to celebrate the tremendous gift of your Son Jesus! We rejoice with gladness. You give us wonderful joy and peace in our Savior. May we rejoice in your goodness with the naked joy of children opening presents. As we bring our offerings, we ask that our lives would reflect your joy and generosity. We pray through Christ our Lord. Amen.

CAROL

“The First Noel”

The first Noel the angel did say
 was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
 in fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
 on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain:

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,
 born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star
 shining in the east, beyond them far;
 and to the earth it gave great light,
 and so it continued both day and night. [Refrain]

And by the light of that same star
 three Wise Men came from country far;
 to seek for a king was their intent,
 and to follow the star wherever it went. [Refrain]

This star drew nigh to the northwest,
 o'er Bethlehem it took its rest;
 and there it did both stop and stay,
 right over the place where Jesus lay. [Refrain]

Then entered in those Wise Men three,
 full reverently upon the knee,
 and offered there, in his presence,
 their gold and myrrh and frankincense. [Refrain]

BENEDICTION

Week of December 27, 2021

Confidential Prayer requests should be sent to Pastor Sabina at pastorsabinaterrades@gmail.com

FOR THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH, its member and mission
For those who seek God or a deeper knowledge of Him

FOR THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, its members and its mission
For the New England Conference, Bishop Devadhar and his family, Districts, and in particular the Commonwealth West District and Superintendent Megan Stowe and her family.
For all pastors and their families, as well as local congregations.

FOR THE WELFARE OF THE WORLD
For peace, justice, goodwill among nations, the well-being of all people, our nation, and all in authority.
For justice for people of all races, colors, cultures, national origin, sex, age, creed, sexual orientation, gender identity, and abilities.
For those serving in the armed forces.

FOR THOSE WHO SUFFER, or are in need or trouble.
For all people on the margins of society, the broken, the forgotten.
For the poor, the addicts, people suffering from mental or physical illness, the homeless, the refugees, the immigrants, the unemployed, the shut-ins, the hungry, the oppressed and those in prison.
For those who grieve, especially the families and friends of the 700,000+ victims of Covid 19.
For the missionaries who were abducted in Haiti.
For the families and friends of the victims of the two school shootings.
For the family and friends of the tornado victims, as well as those who lost their homes.

FOR THE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTHBRIDGE, its members and its mission.
For our ministries and the people we serve.
For the people who grieve at Christmas time:
For **Patti and her family**, as they grieve her niece Tonya's passing
For **Trey's family and friends**
For our shut-in, **Phyllis Olszta**, as she grieves the loss of her grandson, Tommy.
For **Nancy Harwood**, as she grieves for her father, Dick.
For **Sue's sister and brother-in-law**, healing
For the **Filion family and friends** as they grieve the loss of Gerry.
For **Gina, her grandmother, and her children**

For **Jill**, strength and healing
For **Gayle**, healing
For **our congregation**, discernment, wisdom

FOR FAMILY AND FRIENDS:

For Christine's son and daughter-in-law
For **Lynn**, Christine's friend, healing from cancer
For the **Southbridge and neighboring towns communities**
For **Jill's brother**, healing

IN THANKSGIVING FOR:

- * Our partners in ministry: Faith Fellowship, Pastor David Arruda, Corlis and their congregation.
- * Charlton City UMC for their Bread Ministry.
- * The Sturbridge Federated Church and Holice Turnbow for their ongoing financial support and many donations.
- * The Lancaster Food Bank
- * Our amazing volunteers: Astrid, Patti, Cathy, Ashley, Sue, Carl, and Christine, Maya, Jason, Stacy, Anna, Bruce, Laurie...



Office Hours (please make an appointment):
Mondays: 4-5, Fridays: 4-5

Pastor Sabina will be on vacation from Sunday 12/26 after worship to Saturday 01/01.

This week's Schedule:

Monday:
No Bible Study

Wednesday:
No EspresSoul

Friday:
5pm: Rolsilda's Kitchen (free meal)
1-6pm: Carol's Closet
1-6: Bread of Life Food Pantry

Saturday: NEW YEAR'S DAY!!
Church is closed.

Sunday:
10am: Worship