

West Parish of Barnstable

Gathered in London 1616 - Present Meetinghouse Erected in 1717

A Church in the Congregational Tradition

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

West Barnstable, Massachusetts



THE CHURCH AT WORSHIP

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2022

8:00 p.m.

OUR STATEMENT OF WELCOME

As a congregation which covenants to walk together in Christian love,
believes that all persons are created equal before God,
and affirms the inclusive love of Jesus Christ,
we welcome to our work and worship all people
regardless of race, gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation,
ability, or economic circumstance.

Adopted at Annual Meeting, June 26, 2005

GOD GATHERS US

WELCOME

Pastor Reed Baer

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

One: This Advent season, we have waited.

Two: We have waited for family to arrive.

One: We have waited for Amazon deliveries.

Two: We have waited for cookies to bake.

One: We have waited for snow to fall.

Two: We have waited in grocery store lines.

One: We have waited by fireplaces and around dinner tables.

Two: We have waited to raise our candles.

One: We have waited to sing Silent Night.

Two: We have waited for the magic of this night.

One: And now the waiting is over. It is Christmas Eve, which means God is here and you are loved.

Two: May that truth change you. May it inspire you, challenge you, and burn in you like the light from these candles.

One: For tonight, in the illumination of candles of hope, peace, joy and love, we add the light of the Christ candle, for the wait is over.

Two: Love is here. Thanks be to God! Amen.

(The Christ candle is lit)

* HYMN #132 (Red)

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

ADESTE FIDELES

RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP

One: If you are like Joseph, and you are seeking truth,

All: There is room here for you.

One: If you are like Mary, and you are seeking rest,

All: There is a seat here for you.

One: If you are like the wise men, and you are looking for a sign:

All: These candles are here for you.

If you are like the angels, and you cannot help but sing,

All: There is a melody here for you.

One: Come in. You are in God's house. Love was born tonight, and there is love here for you.

All: Let us worship the God of love.

PRELUDE

Chimes At Yuletide

James Mansfield

UNISON PRAYER

God of kings and shepherds, God of teenage mothers and step-parents, God of angel choruses and starlight –

We confess to waiting.

We have waited to extend grace.

We have waited to say “I love you.”

We have waited to apologize.

We have waited to be just, choosing comfort and convenience over the needs of our neighbors.

We have waited –

Waited for someone else to make a move, waited for a sign, waited until it was our issue.

You ask us to be the body of Christ, but in many ways, we have waited.

Forgive us. Change us. Remind us of your love for this world, which cannot wait. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

ANTHEM

Jesus, Jesus, Rest Your Head

John Jacob Niles/arr. Jill Gallina

THE NATIVITY, IN WORD AND SONG

CHRISTMAS ON THE ROAD Luke 2:1-5 (The Message)

HYMN #134 (Red) (seated) “O Little Town of Bethlehem” ST. LOUIS

CHRISTMAS WITH THE ANIMALS Luke 2:6-7 (N.R.S.V.)

HYMN #122 (Red) (seated) “God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen” (v. 1) GOD REST YOU MERRY

CHRISTMAS IN COMMUNITY, BELOW AND ABOVE Luke 2:8-18

SOLO Stranger in the Straw Don Blackley
John Murelle

A CHRISTMAS REFLECTION “The Year Jesus Missed Christmas” Pastor Reed

WE RESPOND TO THE GOOD NEWS

*HYMN #130 (Red) “Joy to the World!” ANTIOCH

ANNOUNCEMENTS, JOYS AND CONCERNS

CALL TO PRAYER

One: God be with you.

Many: And also with you.

One: Let us pray.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

INVITATION TO OFFERING OUR TITHES AND GIFTS

*In thanksgiving to God and giving witness to generous hearts,
our financial gifts support our ministries here and in the wider community.*

Text to Give instructions are on the back page.

OFFERTORY The Shepherd's Cradle Song
Based on a German Carol - Hall M. Maklin

SONG OF PRAISE

**To God, all glorious heavenly Light,
To Christ revealed in earthly night,**

To God the Spirit now we raise,
Our joyful songs of thankful praise. Amen.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

GOD SENDS US FORTH IN JOY!

A CANDELIGHT LITURGY

One: this, then, is how Love is born: like a seed planted in the darkest of soils that rises to meet the sun's warming rays, so love emerges from the deepest places. Despite our willing it, and without the force of hand, may love rise graciously to life.

Many: This, then, is how Love is born: as the morning slowly dawns – first a sliver, then a burning horizon – causing the night to fade away, so love transforms our sorrow and fear. Into our need, moving against resistance, may love change things in our lives and in the world.

Two: This, then, is how Love is born: as winter's gentle hibernation gives way to the bursting of spring and the delights of summer, so love is woven through every season. Amidst our doubts and disappointments, when the sands seem to shift under our feet, may love be steadfast and present at all times.

All: The light from even a single flame makes watching an easier task. Christ's flame reminds us that God is with us.

(The Meetinghouse will be darkened during this part of the service. The central candle in the Advent Wreath is symbolic of Christ's light. Lighting their candles from that candle, the pastors will light the candles of the ushers. The ushers will then light the aisle candles of each pew. In turn, the aisle candles will light the candles of those next, and so on. During the singing of the last verse of "Silent Night", the candles will be held aloft. To prevent the hot wax from dripping, please tilt your unlit candle as you receive the flame from your neighbor's lit candle. Please be age-appropriate with respect to sharing candles with children.)

HYMN #138 (Red) (seated)

"Silent Night"

STILLE NACHT

WORDS OF SENDING

(Following the benediction and during the Postlude,
please extinguish your candles and take them with you to the door as you leave)

POSTLUDE

Herald Angels

Carl Simone/arr. from "Music of the Church", 1843 by Dr. Samuel Arnold

*All who wish, please stand.

A special word to our Christmas Eve visitors: We are *delighted* to have you with us tonight, particularly if you are from the area and are perhaps thinking it might be nice to find a church home. We hope you will consider coming back again – we gather at 4:30 each Saturday (but NOT this week, 12/31) and 10:00 each Sunday.



Christmas Poinsettias



Mindy & Steve Abbott

*in loving memory of Howard and Lois Abbott
and Fred and Martha Strauss*

Jean Birch

in celebration of my grandsons-Alexander and Christopher

Barbara Cameron

in honor of my family

Rik and Sandy Clark

*in memory of our parents: Allen and Doris Clark
and Bill and Eleanore MacCallum*

Paul and Lisa Fackler

*in memory of Dorothy and Walter Fackler
in memory of Bruce and Kay Ota*

Joyce Joakim

in honor of family

Bobbie Jordan

in memory of my parents, Lloyd and Ida

Dan Lupfer & Liz Knox-Lupfer

in celebration of our children and grandchildren

Toni and LeRoy Malouf

*in memory of our parents Clara and Alfred Malouf
and Alice G. and Warren T. Watts*

William and Heiti Manning

in memory of loved ones

Jacqui Martin

*in memory of John Palmer Jenkins
and Peter Pineo Jenkins, Jr.*

Van and Wendy Northcross

*in memory of Judy Rockwell
in honor of our families*

Richard Serodio

dedicated to all who fight for equality

Peter and Betsy Smith

*in memory of Dr. Harold R. and Helen C. Smith
in memory of Newton J. and Muriel P. Buren*

Sharon and Bob Wyman

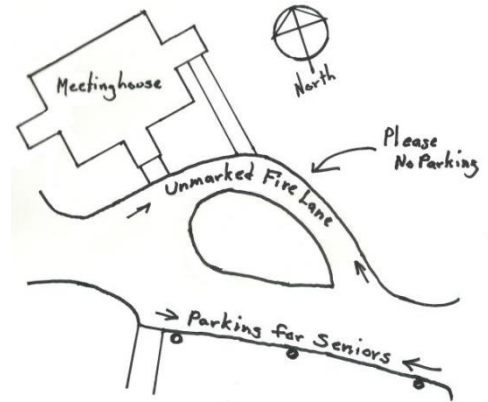
*in loving memory of Sunny and Wesley Merritt
and Evelyn and Edward Wyman*

1717 Meetinghouse Foundation

*in memory of:
Robert Buyer, Edmund Lukas, Robert Lonkart,
Marjorie Keary, Sally Allen, John Palmer Jenkins,
Anne Moreau Thomas, Jacquelyn Mague, Peter Jenkins*

We ask your cooperation in protecting the 1717 Meetinghouse by not parking your vehicle in or alongside the teardrop closest to the Meetinghouse. Although it is not marked, it is a FIRE LANE and preserves clear access to the Meetinghouse for Emergency Vehicles.

However, more parking is available. At least three, maybe four, spaces can be used on the west side of the Tear Drop for those with mobility issues.



Text to Give

If you haven't tried it out, it's easy:

1. Text 866-586-0169 (the give-by-text number for West Parish) and in the body of the message enter the amount you wish to donate and send.
2. You will receive a registration link. Click on it, enter your contact and payment information then press "Process."
3. After registration is complete, you will receive a verification text and receipt via email.

You only need to register and set up your payment information once.

For future giving, simply send a text with the amount you wish to give, and it will process automatically.

Add "West Parish Give by Text" as a contact on your phone to make it even easier!

If you have questions or would like help setting it up, see Marianne Williams.

Church Staff

Reed Baer, Pastor and Teacher
Donna Murphy, Music Director
Kristen Lind, Family School Director
Wendy Northcross, Council Chair

Christine Burns, Associate Pastor
Susan McEwen, Office Administrator
Joseph Findlay, Sexton
Roberta Jordan, Deacons Chair

P.O. Box 219, West Barnstable, MA 02668
Tel. No. 362-4445 Fax No. 375-6431
contact@westparish.org www.westparish.org