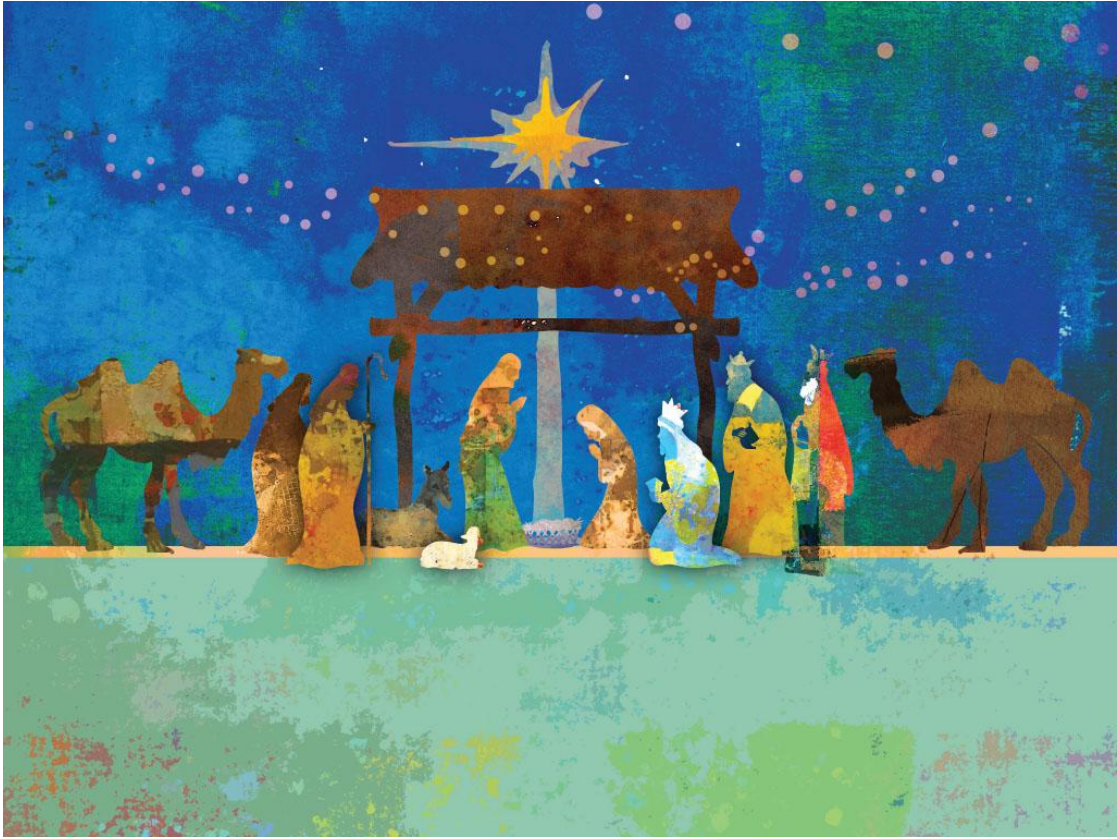




THE CHURCH AT WORSHIP

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2025

4:30 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 ADVENT CANDLES

(Maren Tirabassi and Howard Thurman)

*One: We have gathered at this wreath
all this Advent season to light candles.*

*We claim that Emmanuel, God with us
is Light and Darkness in a world
that must work and rest,
be generous and self-careful,
experience tears and laughter,
in order to share
both the hurt and humor of others
from the deep place of knowing it.*

Let us light these candles on this holy night.

Two: I light the candle of hope,
and hopelessness cannot hide.

I light the candle of peace,
and expose hatred as fear turned inside out.

I light the candle of joy,
and everyone is welcome with a smile,
a moment of beauty or wonder.

I light the candle of love,
and hands are clasped around the world.

All: THIS IS CHRISTMAS

**The evergreen singing aloud its poem of constant renewal,
The festive mood spreading lilting magic everywhere,
The gifts of recollection calling to heart the graces of life,
The star in the sky calling to mind the wisdom of hope,
The warmth of candlelight glowing against the darkness,
The birth of a child linking past to future,
The symbol of love absorbing all violence,
THIS IS CHRISTMAS.**

*One: O Holy God, we light the Christ candle.
It shines on smiles and tears.
It shines into the lives of everyone.
It shines and we remember the story.
It shines around angels
who sing for the most vulnerable,
and guides the long traveling
of those from far away.*

**Two: It shines on a manger,
a child and parents,
with animals gathered all around.
It shines on here and now people
just like Bethlehem long ago.**

**It can never be extinguished,
because, Christ, you are tonight's candle,
and we promise –
to lift our wicks to tomorrow's flame. Amen.**

* HYMN #132 (Red)

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

ADESTE FIDELES

RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP

Associate Pastor Christie Burns

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.

One: 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

"Flute Christmas Medley"
and "Carol of the Bells"

UNISON PRAYER

We come before you this late afternoon in awe, O God, freshly aware of your glory and your love embodied in the midst of this world. Here amid the dirt and straw, amid noise of cattle and labor of birth, we perceive your work. We dare to believe that it is you, God, coming to be among us as Jesus, and so with songs of joy we praise you. Glory be to you, O God, now and forevermore.

In thanksgiving we pray, as Jesus taught us, saying together . . .

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.

THE NATIVITY, IN WORD AND SONG

CHRISTMAS ON THE ROAD

Luke 2:1-5 (The Message)

HANDBELL CHOIR with flute "Carol of the Shepherds"

T. Gregory

CHRISTMAS WITH THE ANIMALS

Luke 2:6-7 (N.R.S.V.)

HYMN(seated) #122 (Red) "God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen" (v. 1, 4)

CHRISTMAS IN COMMUNITY, BELOW AND ABOVE

Luke 2:8-18

ANTHEM

"Calypso Lullaby"

J. Hairston/J. Raney

A CHRISTMAS REFLECTION "The Grinch at the Manger"

Pastor Reed

WE RESPOND TO THE GOOD NEWS

*HYMN #130 (Red)

“Joy to the World!”

with the Hand Bell Choir

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

CHRISTMAS TRIO

“O Holy Night”

arr. S. Desare

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.
We now accept Venmo, the qr code and instructions are on the back page.*

OFFERTORY

“What Child is This?”

Flute and organ duet

*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 CANDLELIGHT 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

"Shepherd's Dance"

R. Elliot

*All who wish, please stand.

A special word to our Christmas Eve visitors: We are *delighted* to have you with us this evening, 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, 12/27) and 10:00 each Sunday.

Special thanks to Becky Abbott, Ruby Abbott, Catriona Morris-King, Katherine Morris-King, and John Murrelle for joining us this Christmas Eve and sharing their musical talents with us.



Poinsettia Sponsors



Steve & Mindy Abbott	in loving memory of our parents: Howard & Lois Abbott and Fred & Martha Strauss
Barbara Cameron	in memory of Vincent Conroy and Jean Birch
Rik & Sandy Clark	in memory of our parents
Rev. Betsy Garland & Kim Baker	in celebration of great-grandchildren: Willa and Itsuki
Paul & Lisa Fackler	in celebration of Henry Fackler Chen and Chloe Fackler Chen
Bobbie Jordan	in celebration of family
Ken & Diane Juthe	in memory of our loved passed family members
Greg & Jane Ketchen	in memory of Gould & Charlotte Ketchen, Clara & Arlan Skinner and Susan Emery
Liz Knox-Lupfer & Dan Lupfer	in celebration of our children & grandchildren
Heiti & Bill Manning	in celebration of our children, grandchildren, and loved ones
Toni & LeRoy Malouf	world peace
Laura Murphy	in celebration of family and friends
Gretchen & Bob Naylor	in memory of Anna & Ray Naylor and Phyllis & Herb Hoffman
Jan Scarpato	in memory of my husband, Bob
Peter & Betsy Smith	in memory of Dr. Harold R. & Helen C. Smith, Newton J. & Muriel P. Buren, and Carol R. Woodruff and James W. Buren
Bob & Shirley Stolte	in memory of Elizabeth & Alfred Hodgkins and and Lucia & Albert Stolte
Annie Taber & John Linhares	in memory of family who are no longer with us
Sharon & Bob Wyman	in memory of Sunny & Wesley Merritt and Evelyn & Edward Wyman
The 1717 Meetinghouse Foundation	in memory of Thomas Davis, Russ Gessner, Donald Foster, Steven Howland, Everard Munsey, Barbara Rogers, Rick Serodio, and Jay Tracy

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

Need to get connected? Wi-Fi: Meetinghouse **Password:** 1717Rooster

Venmo @WestParish or scan the QR code.



venmo

To make a donation, simply scan the QR code with your phone's camera or search "@WestParish" on the Venmo app.

Be sure you select "West Parish of Barnstable" under the charity profiles.

If you would like your donation to go toward something specific like "Deacons", just note that in the description.

Church Staff

Reed Baer, Pastor and Teacher
Paula King, Music Director
Susan Moeller, Council Chair
Alycia Williams, Family School Director

Christine Burns, Associate Pastor
Susan McEwen, Office Administrator
Roberta Jordan, Deacons Chair
Chris Haven, Sexton

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