The Congregational Church of Salisbury UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



"Pastoral Symphony" from Messiah

G.F. Handel

WELCOME

PRELUDE

▲ HYMN (p. 6) "Tell Out, My Soul"
 (▲ The congregation may rise, in body or in spirit.)

WOODLANDS

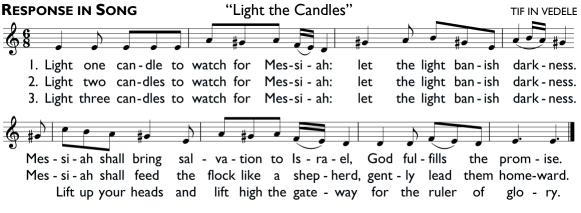
ANNOUNCEMENTS | JOYS AND CONCERNS | SILENT PRAYER

THE ADVENT WREATH "The Highway of the Holy One" Edmundson Family READER ONE: "The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus.... A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.... And the ransomed of the HOLY ONE shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads." (Isaiah 35:1-2, 8, 10).

READER TWO: The prophet calls us to imagine being set free, being unburdened, being released to live, to fully live in the grace of life itself, surrounded by those who love us utterly. And then he tells us that the journey to get there is just as much a joy.

READER ONE: With the Psalmist we say, "Happy are these whose help is the God of our ancestors: who made heaven and earth; who keeps faith; who executes justice, gives food, sets prisoners free, opens eyes, lifts up, watches over. The HOLY ONE will reign forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise God!" (Psalm 146)

READER TWO: We light these candles — the candle of joyous hope, of proclaimed peace, and of deep joy — because we trust in the promise, and it is a wonder. We are ascending to God's shalom.



TEXT: Wayne L. Wold, 1984, adapt. MUSIC: Yiddish folk song, arr. Wayne L. Wold, 1984. © 1984 Fortress Press. All rights reserved. Reprinted under OneLicense.net A-725033.

CALL TO RECONCILIATION

ONE: There is no need to wait in long lines. God is always willing to listen to our hearts as well as our voices, as we admit the limits of our caring and our sharing.

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

This season is filled with tender holiness, God of Christmas,

- yet the din of sales pitches causes us to raise our defenses.
- We enjoy lovely decorations on the houses —

but we have missed seeing, inside, the loneliness of the widower, the strained faces of those who fear the future.

- We sort through gifts and cards to find one that speaks of delight and lose track of the miracle, that you came so long ago to offer justice and joy to those who have none.
- Be patient with us, God of our hearts, as we struggle and strive to lend our voices to the voiceless,

to walk with those who have lost their way,

to let go of our certainty of what really happened so long ago,

and sing of the hope that really can bring reconciliation,

of the peace that really can give hope,

of the joy that really came to us that night in Bethlehem, in the birth of Jesus, our Brother, our Savior.

(Silence is kept)

Assurance of Pardon

ONE: Be not afraid, but believe! Our God is here, opening our eyes to welcome the joy that is ours, approaching us in this season of Advent.

We join our voices in rejoicing in God who is our Savior. The One who calls us blessed, is the God who forgives us. Amen.

RESPONSIVE CANTICLE

Luke 1:47-55

One: My spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for God has looked with favor on the lowliness of this servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is the Divine name.

Holy mercy is for those who fear God from generation to generation.

God has shown strength with an Almighty arm;

has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

God has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly;

God has filled the hungry with good things,

and sent the rich away empty.

God has helped the servant people Israel,

in remembrance of divine mercy,

according to the holy promise made to our ancestors,

to Abraham and Sarah

and to their descendants forever."

A THOUGHT FOR YOUNG MINDS

THE LORD'S PRAYER (debts/debtors)

Hymnal, p. 35

№ Нүм #98

"To a Maid Whose Name Was Mary" All attending Church School may leave as we sing the hymn. ANNUNCIATION



Guitar chords do not correspond with keyboard harmony.

This 20th-century ballad-like retelling of the Annunciation (Luke 1:26–38) displays many characteristics of a folksong style, especially repetition in both text and tune and short quotations included in the narrative. Such features help to make a song both memorable and singable.

OFFERTORY

ONE: The reasons for joy keep increasing! From this morning's first breath, to the dawn that pushed back the darkness, to the gathering of this family of faith, to the flickering addition of a the third candle to our wreath, to the sacred music and Word of Advent — we witness blessing upon blessing: each a testimony to God's extraordinary goodness. In our generous giving, we dare to invest in God's promise of life transformed by joy.

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.

MUSICAL OFFERING	"Of a Rose, a Lovely Rose"	John Rutter
	from Magnificat	

DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise Christ, all people here below; praise Holy Spirit ever more; One God of grace, whom we adore! Amen.

✤ Unison Prayer of Dedication

We pray that with our gifts, as well as our lives, we will tell the joy of those who are given voice, those who are put back on their feet, those who show us the way, and those who offer us grace and hope, as well. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Scripture Readings	Isaiah 35:1-10	Testament, p. 811
	Matthew 11:2-11	New Testament, p. 13
Sermon	"Tell It!"	Pastor John A. Nelson
Pastoral Prayer		
 № Нүм I. O come, O come, E And with your peop 		VENI EMMANUEL

Who mourn in mortal exile here Until the Light of Life appear.

Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come again, and with us ever dwell.

- O come, thou Wisdom from on high, And order all things, far and nigh; To us the paths of knowledge show, And cause us in thy ways to go. Refrain
- O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer
 Our spirits by thine advent here;
 Disperse the gloomy shades of night,
 Break through the clouds and bring us light. Refrain
- 4. O come, Desire of nations, bind All people in one heart and mind; Bid envy, strife and quarrels cease; Fill the whole world with perfect peace. Refrain

BENEDICTION and SUNG AMEN

POSTLUDE



Gathered in 1744, the Congregational Church of Salisbury is an Open and Affirming member of the United Church of Christ. It 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

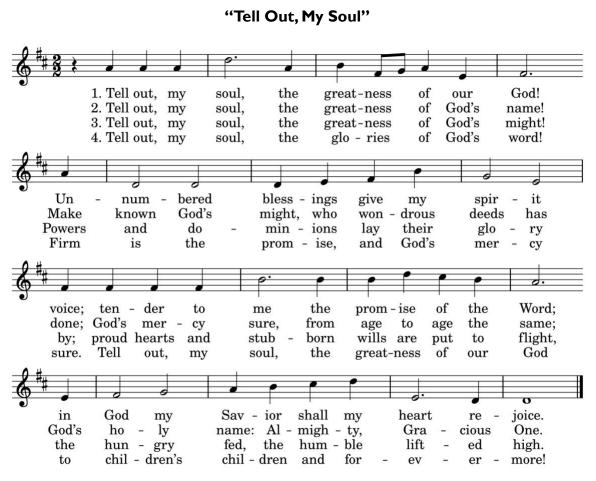
orientation. We **Affirm** each individual as a child of God, celebrating the total identity of each person.

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. Assistive Listening Devices are available; please ask an usher for assistance.

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



Today's Worship Leaders

Ushers: Joanne Taber, Kevin Wolgemuth Reader: Patricia Palmer • Deacon: Sue Morrill Fellowship hosts: Ron and Sarah Collins

Flowers have been placed in the Meeting House to the glory of God, by Ron and Sarah Collins.

Today's liturgy is adapted and reprinted from *Lectionary Liturgies* by the Rev. Thom Shuman © 2022 (lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com); used by permission. Psalm adapted from *The Psalms in Worship*, Mary Susan Gast, © 2002; used by permission.

Our Ministry Team

Ministers: All Participants in the Life of the Congregation

Worship & Music

Music Director: David Baranowski Bell Choir Director: Mary Davidson Cantor: Jennifer Oberto

Faith Formation

Sunday School Coordinator: Holly Tierney Sunday School Assistant: Jennifer Kronholm-Clark

Holding the Parts Together

Administrative Assistant: Loriann Chevremont Sexton: Richard Tietjen Stewardship & Database Mgr: Kelly Rybczyk **Church Officers**: Betsy Beck, moderator; Jennifer Weigel, *treasurer*; Jennifer Oberto, *clerk*

Pastor and Teacher: The Rev. Dr. John A. Nelson

Occasions for Service, Witness, and Prayer

IN OUR PRAYERS:

We gladly list joys and concerns, and typically print them for four weeks after they are offered in worship. (Prayer requests may be renewed at any time.)

New additions:

Weekly prayer from UCC Global Ministries: Alex Maldonado-Lizardi and Xiomara Cintron-Garcia, Global Ministries Mission Co-workers serving with Justapaz in Colombia.

Continuing concerns:

Ben Salamone, recovering from surgery • Survivors of the mass shooting in Colorado Springs, first responders and caregivers, those who are bereaved, those who are traumatized by yet another act of senseless gun violence • John Lomanto, recovering from surgery • Margaret Haubrich, in memory care • The people of Ukraine and all striving to end war • All those serving or living in war or conflict zones around the world.

For those in treatment for cancer — Jenny, Frank Swaye, David Douyea, MingMing, Deborah Merwin, Keith Blanton and others — prayers for healing and strength.

Family & Friends who have passed away

Barbara Baranowski • Marian Ferguson • families and friends of more than 39,450 beloveds who

have died due to Covid-19 disease in the last four weeks, including 9,006 in the US •

We thank God for the gift of life, and pray for the Spirit's strong presence with family and friends who grieve.

Thanksgiving

The Rev. Ryan Gackenheimer, called as Pastor and Teacher of First Congregational Church of Bethel (CT) UCC.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE A PASTORAL VISIT, please call the church office (860-435-2442) or email Pastor John (jnelson@salisburyucc.org). Sometimes we don't find out about an injury or illness or other need until long after — so please call!

This Week at Salisbury UCC

SUNDAY, II DECEMBER

10AM Worship followed by fellowship & refreshments in the Parish Hall

MONDAY, 12 DECEMBER

I I:30AM Duplicate Bridge Club

TUESDAY, 13 DECEMBER

7PM Handbell Choir concert at Geer Village

WEDNESDAY, 14 DECEMBER

- 12:30PM Staff Meeting
- 4PM Women's Bible Study
- 5:30PM Choir Rehearsal
- 6PM Board of Deacons meeting

THURSDAY, 15 DECEMBER

I I:30AM Duplicate Bridge Club

FRIDAY, 16 DECEMBER

8:45AM Men's Bible Study 3-5PM Souper Suppers pick up



The Congregational Church of Salisbury UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey: you are welcome here. 30 Main Street | P.O. Box 392 | Salisbury, CT 06068 • 860-435-2442 email: welcome@salisburyucc.org • web: salisburyucc.org Office Hours: 8:30am – 1:30pm, Monday-Friday