



Wilbraham United Church

*A Congregation of the United Church of Christ
and the United Methodist Church*

500 Main Street

Wilbraham MA 01095

Phone: (413)596-2511

www.wilbrahamunitedchurch.org

Facebook.com/WilbrahamUnitedChurch

December 3, 2023

1st Sunday of Advent

10:00AM

We ask that everyone wear nametags so that we can be welcoming to all. There are listening devices available for those that may need them. An usher will be happy to assist you. Following the service, everyone is invited to our time of refreshments and friendship in our Fellowship Hall. Please make a left out of our sanctuary, down the hall, and up the stairs. If you are unable to use the stairs, an elevator is available.

GATHERING MUSIC

Piano: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

arr. T. Keesecker

Bells: Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

arr. L. Larson

WELCOMING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

WELCOME

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

Kathy and Tim Timpson

Advent---Hope

Leader: Today is the beginning of Advent. It is a time of preparation for celebrating Christ's birth. This a holy time made brilliant by a great love set down before us, to lead us out of darkness and into the way of peace.

Leader: We light this candle to proclaim God's light coming into the world. The coming of this light brings hope: hope that righteousness may prevail over evil, that salvation may triumph over sin, and hope that light may chase away the darkness.

UNISON PRAYER

O God, We thank you for bringing us the light of hope and salvation to a hurting and needy world. We thank you also for showing us the way to do good things in the world, so that our acts of worship may translate into actions which drive away sin, and which heralds in the light of Christ, all the yearlong. Amen

***GATHERING HYMN # 211(UMH)**

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

CALL TO WORSHIP

Patti Colkos

Leader: We wait with anticipation for the One who brings good news, who proclaims peace, who promises salvation, who leads us in the ways of righteousness.

People: We rejoice in this Advent season, and we wait with eagerness and we worship this day with joy. Thanks be to God

UNISON PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Holy God, We are eager to follow in your light. Our hearts are ready to receive you and we delight in your presence. We gather before you because you have called to us, sought us out, and we rejoice in answering. Hold us close to yourself and help us to cast away our sin, so that we may be pure of heart and ready, when your light comes into the world. Amen

***SONG OF PRAISE #207 (UMH)**

*Prepare the way of the Lord, Prepare the way of the Lord,
and all people will see the salvation of our God.*

***SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 64: 1-9

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence— as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil— to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence!

When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down; the mountains quaked at your presence.

From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him.

You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways.

But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed.

We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.

We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

There is no one who calls on your name or attempts to take hold of you,

for you have hidden your face from us and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.

Yet, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.

Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

NEW TESTAMENT READING

I Corinthians 1: 3-9

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind—just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you—so that you are not lacking in any gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the partnership of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass 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.

Sung Response # 204 (UMH)

Emmanuel, Emmanuel, his name is called Emmanuel.

God with us, revealed in us, his name is called Emmanuel.

GOSPEL READING

Mark 13: 24-37

“But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

“Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels and gather the elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert, for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake, for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening or at midnight or at cockcrow or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

SERMON

Communion Meditation

Rev. Janet

***HYMN # 626 (UMH)**

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS AND OURSELVES

Invitation to Give

Offertory

In Silence We Wait

J. Parker/L. Larson

Chancel Choir

***Doxology**

*What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
If I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;
Yet what can I give him, give him my heart.*

***Prayer of Dedication**

SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation to Communion

Pastor: God be with you

People: And also with you

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to God

Pastor: Let us give thanks to God Most High

People: It is right to give God thanks and praise

Words of Remembrance

Distribution of Elements

Prayer of Thanksgiving

***PARTING HYMN (See insert)**

Isaiah the Prophet Has Written of Old

***FOLLOWING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST INTO THE WORLD**

***BENEDICTION**

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE # 211 (UMH)**

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

MUSIC FOR SENDING FORTH

Piano: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

arr. M. Hayes

**All who are able to stand, may do so.*

The altar flowers this morning are being given to the Glory of God.

Welcome Visitors! *Is this your first visit to United Church? Please sign a Pew Card. Immediately after the service, we invite you to continue down the central hallway and join us for Fellowship and Refreshment in our Fellowship Hall.*

MINISTERING TO YOU TODAY

Pastor: Rev. Janet Sandquist-Skagerlind

Music Director: Roberta Morkin

Technical and Artistic Directors: Deb Trimble

Ushers: Poppy Nelson, Marty Lyman

Liturgist: Patti Colkos

Greeters: David & Joyce Pierangelo

Communion: Poppy Nelson, Marty Lyman



Please Pray For: Shey McAbee, Michelle McBride, Sharon McAbee, Jim Trimble, Catherine Tucker, Connie and Bob Law, The victims of violence and their families in our country. Our troops, our country and our world.



“News for the Pews” for the Week of December 3, 2023

A meeting of the **Communion Servers and Preparers** with Rev. Janet will be held after church on Sunday December 17th at 11:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary. If you are part of that group, please make every effort to attend.

Order Forms for **Christmas Poinsettias** are available in the Narthex. Please drop off completed orders to the Church Office by December 13th.

Don't forget to order your **Shopping Cards**. Special orders are sent in every other week through December. Our next order will be placed December 10th! Cards generally arrive before Sunday the following week! Shopping cards make great Christmas Gifts!

It's not too late to send in your **Pledge Card** for 2024! Cards can be mailed to the church office or dropped off at any time during office hours.

Sign-up sheets for our church's **Holly Fair** are posted on the bulletin board outside the Christian Ed Office. Please sign up to help on December 9th! Many hands make light work!

Altar Flower sign ups are now available for 2024. Plus there are several Sundays open in December. Altar flowers cost \$30 and are available as either a single arrangement or two arrangements for the same cost. Dedications are included in the bulletin that Sunday and flowers may either be taken home after the worship service, or delivered to shut-ins.

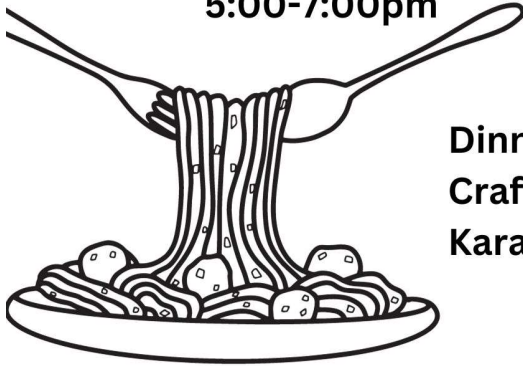
Wilbraham United Church Staff

Rev. Janet Sandquist- Skagerlind: Pastor (pastor@wilbrahamunitedchurch.org) (413)596-2511 x 103
Deb Trimble: Administrator (admin@wilbrahamunitedchurch.org) (413)596-2511 x100
Bobbie Morkin: Music Director (musicdirector@wilbrahamunitedchurch.org) (413)596-2511 x106

Spaghetti Supper

Saturday December 16th

5:00-7:00pm



**Dinner
Crafts
Karaoke**

**Fellowship Hall
Wilbraham United Church**

Local Solutions Global Impact



A flock of chickens



A trio of rabbits



A hive of honeybees

Stop by the Heifer International table in Fellowship Hall to find all the ways you can donate this December. Partner with Heifer International and smallholder farmers – especially women farmers – to improve their families' food security and increase their incomes.

Isaiah the Prophet Has Written of Old

Isa. 11:6-9; 55:10-13

Joy F. Patterson, 1982; rev. 1993

Am7 Bm7 Em sus4 Em Em

1 I - sa - iah the proph-et has
 2 The moun-tains and hills shall break
 3 Yet na - tions still prey on the
 4 God, bring to fru - i - tion your

D Em Em Am G Bm Em

writ-en of old how God's new cre - a - tion shall come. In - stead of the
 forth in - to song, the peo - ples be led forth in peace; The earth shall be
 meek of the world, and con - flict turns par-ent from child. Your peo - ple de -
 will for the earth, that no one shall hurt or de - stroy, That wis - dom and

Bm7 C Em/G D

thorn tree, the fir tree shall grow; the wolf shall lie down with the
 filled with the knowl-edge of God as the wa - ters cov - er the
 spoil all the sweet-ness of earth; the brier and the thorn tree grow
 jus - tice shall reign in the land and your peo - ple shall go forth in

C D Em Am7 Bm7 Em

lamb, the lamb, the wolf shall lie down with the lamb.
 sea, the sea, as the wa - ters cov - er the sea.
 wild, grow wild, the brier and the thorn tree grow wild.
 joy, in joy, your peo - ple shall go forth in joy.

MONSON SAVINGS
COMMUNITY GIVING
INITIATIVE

VOTE

FOR OUR CHURCH
TO RECEIVE
SUPPORT IN 2024!

TO VOTE, VISIT:
MONSONSAVINGS.BANK

**CALLING ALL
COOKIE BAKERS!**

Help spread the Christmas cheer, one
cookie at a time and make this year's
Cookie Walk another success!

Who: Anyone!
 What: Your special Christmas cookies, bars
and barks
 Where: Place in church freezer or kitchen
 When: Anytime on Friday, December 8th

Contact: Chrissy Plumb
(Plumb1993@charter.net)

Thank you for all your help!!!

This Week at Wilbraham United Church

Sunday, December 3, 2023

10:00 a.m. –Worship

11:00 a.m. – Fellowship Hour (FH)

5:00 p.m. - Al- Anon (YR)

Monday, December 4, 2023

Church Office 8:30 – 1:30

10:00 a.m. – Piece Makers

6:00 p.m. – Girl Scouts (TS)

Tuesday, December 5, 2023

Church Office 8:30 – 2:00

2:00 p.m. – Bible Study (ZR)

Wednesday, December 6, 2023

Church Office 11:00 – 3:30

8:30 a.m. – Men's Breakfast Group

11:00 a.m. – Staff Meeting (Office)

11:30 a.m. – Women's Fellowship (ZR)

12:00 p.m. - Cookie Baking

(Kitchen/FH)

6:30 p.m. – Boy Scouts (TS & SS)

Thursday, December 7, 2023

Church Office 8:30 – 1:30

6:30 p.m. – Al Anon (YR)

7:00 p.m. – Bell Choir (Sanc)

8:00 p.m. – Chancel Choir (CR)

Friday, December 8, 2023

Church Office closed

Saturday, December 9, 2023

HOLLY FAIR!

Sunday, December 10, 2023

10:00 a.m. –Worship

11:00 a.m. – Fellowship Hour (FH)

5:00 p.m. - Al- Anon (YR)



READ IT

This week's Bible story is
Be Ready
from Mark 13:24-37.



Advent 1

God works for good, even in troubled times.

Ask each other what you remember about:

- Sun • Fig Tree
- Moon • Master
- Stars • Slave

Mark wrote his gospel primarily for a non-Jewish, Roman audience around 70 C.E. It includes many descriptions of Jewish customs, including the ways they had to wash themselves and how they celebrated holidays. These details helped the Roman people understand Jesus both as a person and as the one the Jews had been waiting for, the Son of God.

Read the whole story together in the Bible!

Spark Story Bible pages 346-347

Spark Bible page 1119

Family Prayer

Dear God, The world can be a scary place sometimes. Stay with us and help us remember that good will always follow the bad. We will trust you to lead us out of darkness. Amen.

TALK ABOUT IT



Family Conversations

- 1 Share a time of trouble in your own life. How did you see God working for good during this time?
- 2 When Mark wrote his gospel, Jerusalem was at war with Rome. How do you think his Roman audience would feel reading Mark 13:24-26? What would it remind them of?
- 3 No one knows when Jesus will return. What can we do to "keep awake" and prepare for that monumental event?
- 4 Today's passage contains some magnificent, and sometimes frightening, imagery: the sun will be darkened, and the stars will fall from heaven. What do these images remind you of? How do they show God's power?



Eye Spark

When you go outside, look up at the clouds and remember that Jesus will return through them someday "with great power and glory."



Ear Spark

During a storm, listen to the loud claps of thunder. The sounds may be scary, but remember that God is present, even in the darkness.

Lectioary, Be Ready Family Page, Spark™ Sunday School
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LIVE IT

For families to do together

Plant a garden of perennial flowers (that re-bloom every year) in your yard or in a window box. Remember the sign of the blooming fig tree, and watch for signs of summer in your garden.

For younger kids

Keep a journal of scary things that happen to you. After you write about what happened, write about how God helped you through it. Remember that God works for good in everything.

For older kids

Read newspaper articles and browse websites to find out about recent natural disasters in the world. Look for ways to offer support, such as donating money or collecting food and supplies to send to the people in need. How can we help God work for good even after terrible events?

