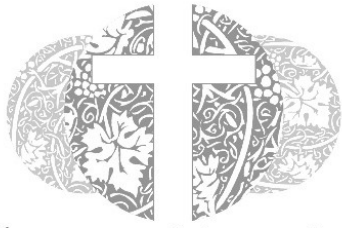




Merry Christmas

Wilbraham United Church

December 29, 2024



Wilbraham United Church
"I am the vine, you are the branches."

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 29, 2024

1st Sunday after Christmas

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.

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

GATHERING MUSIC

Piano: The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns

T. Keesecker

WELCOMING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

WELCOME

Marty Lyman

***GATHERING HYMN # 224 (UMH)**

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

CALL TO WORSHIP

Marty Lyman

Liturgist: People of God, sing and rejoice! God has come to us in the child of Bethlehem, to reconcile and make new.

People: God has entered our existence of joy and sorrow, taking on human likeness in Jesus, born of Mary.

Liturgist: Therefore, we rejoice, praising God and saying:

ALL: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to all God's people!

UNISON PRAYER OF INVOCATION

We come before you in awe, O God, freshly aware of your glory and your love embodied in the midst of this world. In this busy time, we confess that we can get caught up in our own concerns. We forget to listen for your voice. We miss opportunities to show your compassion. Our worries keep us from being instruments of your peace. Surprise us with your presence, fill our hearts with your love and make us new through the gladness of this Holy season. Amen.

***SONG OF PRAISE #238 refrain (UMH)**

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

***SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OLD TESTAMENT

1 Samuel 2: 18-20, 26

Samuel was ministering before the Lord, a boy wearing a linen ephod. His mother used to make for him a little robe and take it to him each year when she went up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. Then Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife and say, "May the Lord repay you with children by this woman for the loan that she made to the Lord," and then they would return to their home. Now the boy Samuel continued to grow both in stature and in favor with the Lord and with the people.

NEW TESTAMENT

Colossians 3: 12-17

Therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

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 # 230 vs 4 (UMH)

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!

GOSPEL READING

Luke 2: 41-52

Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents were unaware of this. Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him they were astonished, and his mother said to him, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously looking for you." He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he said to them. Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was obedient to them, and his mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years and in divine and human favor.

One: This is the word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God!

SERMON

I Thought He Was With You

Rev. Tarantino

*HYMN # 242 (UMH)

Love Came Down at Christmas

OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS AND OURSELVES

Invitation to Give

Offertory

Gesu Bambino

P. Yon

Deb Trimble, Soloist

*Doxology #254 (UMH)

*Star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light*

*Prayer of Dedication

*PARTING HYMN # 251 (UMH) *Go, Tell It on the Mountain*

*FOLLOWING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST INTO THE WORLD

*BENEDICTION

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE # 246 vs 4 (UMH)

*He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness, and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love.*

MUSIC FOR SENDING FORTH

Organ – The Wexford Carol

arr. D.E. Wagner

Welcome Visitors! *Is this your first visit to United Church? If you wish to be contacted by a member of the church or our pastor, please leave your contact information with one of the ushers or place a visitor card in the collection plate. We invite you to join us in our time of Fellowship after the service. Our ushers or a member of the ministry team will be happy to accompany you and help you find your way!*



*UMH – The “red” United Methodist Hymnal
TFWS – The “small black” book Faith We Sing Hymnal*



Please Pray For: Catherine Tucker, Connie Law, Shey McAbee, Michelle McBride, Sharon McAbee, Jim Trimble, Bill McCullough, Catherine Gardner, Larry Harris, David Pierangelo, The victims of violence and their families in our country. Our troops, our country and our world.

*If you are in need of Pastoral Care, please contact Rev. Janet or the Church Office.
After office hours, Rev. Janet can be reached at (978)350-3463.*

MINISTERING TO YOU TODAY

Visiting Pastor: Rev. Susan Tarantino
Music Director: Roberta Morkin
Technical and Artistic Director: Deb Trimble
Ushers: Bill Lynch, Tom Toman
Liturgist: Marty Lyman
Greeter: Gail & Chris Lima

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

“News for the Pews” for the Week of December 29, 2024

The Church office will be closed through Wednesday January 1st for the holiday. Deb will be in the office on Thursday January 2nd. Rev. Janet will be on vacation until January 5th. In the event of an emergency please contact Rev. Janet or notify the office.

Year End Pledge Reminder: As we approach the end of the year, this is the last worship service date left in 2024. This prompts this reminder regarding the IRS rules that we must follow regarding reporting of gifts, from which there can be no exceptions.

To qualify as a gift for tax year 2024, the gift must be either:

- 1) if mailed, be postmarked on or before Tuesday, December 31, 2024, or
- 2) be placed in the offering this morning.

Further, if the gift is a check, the check must be dated on or before December 31, 2024.

We must point out this example: a check dated on or before December 31 that does not meet the criteria listed above will be counted as a gift received in 2025. If made to fulfill a 2024 pledge, it will be noted and appear as “Pledge – Prior Year” in the 2025 accounting.

This Week at Wilbraham United Church

Sunday, December 29, 2024

10:00 a.m. –Worship

11:00 a.m. – Fellowship Hour (FH)

5:00 p.m. – Al Anon (YR)

Monday, December 30, 2024

Church Office closed

Tuesday, December 31, 2024

Church Office closed

Wednesday, January 1, 2025

Church Office closed

Thursday, January 2, 2025

Church Office 8:30 – 1:30

6:30 p.m. – Al Anon (YR)

Friday, January 3, 2025

Church Office closed

Saturday, January 4, 2025

Church Office closed

Sunday, January 5, 2025

10:00 a.m. –Worship

11:00 a.m. – Fellowship Hour (FH)

5:00 p.m. – Al Anon (YR)

Please note the Church Office will be closed until January 2nd.

READ IT

This week's Bible story is

The Boy at the Temple

from Luke 2:41-52



Christmas 1

Jesus is lost, then found in God's house.

Ask each other what you remember about:

- Jesus
- Passover
- Mary
- Joseph
- Temple
- Teachers

This is the only story in the Bible about Jesus when he was a child. It appears only in the Gospel of Luke.

Read the whole story together in the Bible!

Spark Story Bible pages 230-233

Spark Bible pages 1131-1132

Family Prayer

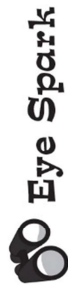
Thank you, God, for our church. Thank you for everything we learn about you and about Jesus. Be with everyone who works at our church and everyone who worships you there. In Jesus' name we pray...AMEN.

TALK ABOUT IT



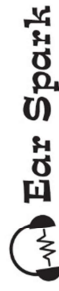
Family Conversations

- 1 What do you like best about church? What do you like the least?
- 2 If you were going to teach a class at church, what would you teach?
- 3 What special celebrations do you like sharing with family and friends?
- 4 Take some time to review your family's safety plan(s) for when you become separated. What should the children do? What will the adults do? What is your family's plan for scary situations when you are unable to find each other?



Eye Spark

Do you know any twelve-year-olds? When you see them, remember that's how old Jesus was in this story.



Ear Spark

Listen to the sounds and noises at church. Think about what Jesus might have heard when he was in God's house as a child.

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LIVE IT

For families to do together

Play "Scenarios" next time you're in the car. Take turns giving each other "scenarios" in which you are lost or separated from the group. Test each other to see if you all know the correct safety measures for a variety of situations.

For younger kids

Make a special gift like a picture, cookies, or a thank you note for those who teach you at church.

For older kids

Jesus' family traveled to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. Research the Passover celebration then and now. What resources are available online? At your local library? At a local synagogue?



