

The Congregational Church of Westborough

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

57 West Main, Westborough, Massachusetts 01581

December 17, 2023



Photo by KaLisa Veer on Unsplash

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

JOY

WE WELCOME VISITORS AND NEWCOMERS!

We are an "Open and Affirming" Church



WELCOME!

To our worshipping community, especially to parents: God put the wiggle in children; don't feel you have to suppress it in God's house! We welcome you and your children. Children are a gift to the church and a reminder that the church is growing. May our church be a place where we give smiles of encouragement to parents!

Are you visiting with us today? We are glad you are here!
WHETHER YOU HAVE JOINED US BY PHONE, IPAD, OR COMPUTER

We celebrate "OPEN DOORS and GROWING FAITH"
"No matter who you are or where you are on your life's journey, you are welcome here."

CONTACTS AND INFORMATION

Rev. Betsy Dorsi, Pastor – revbetsyccw@gmail.com
Joseph Stillitano, Director of Music – uccwestboromusic@gmail.com
Linda Borglund, Director of Faith Formation – lborglund53@gmail.com
Sue Menzel, Director of Bells – westcongmusic@gmail.com
Lisa Coffey, Administrator – westboroucc@verizon.net
Deb Boucher, Communications Coordinator – deb.boucher.15@gmail.com

Office Hours

Tuesday – Friday: 9am – 1pm
Monday: Closed
Church office phone 508/366-2000

*General Church email – westboroucc@verizon.net, Church website- www.uccwestboro.org
www.facebook.com/TheCongregationalChurchofWestborough*

Statement of Inclusion

We, the people of The Congregational Church of Westborough, United Church of Christ, believe that all people are created equal, in God's image. "We are all God's children." In our journey of faith, we strive for justice and equality for all. We invite and welcome into our community and into the full life and Christian ministry of this church, persons of every race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, family structure, faith background, economic circumstance, mental and physical ability. We say, and mean, "No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here." We declare ourselves an Open and Affirming Christian community, actively expressing our belief in diversity and inclusion. We seek to be a faith community centered in Christ, ready to proclaim the Gospel and seek to grow through the transformative power of the Holy Spirit. We offer to each person acceptance and the responsibilities and blessings of participation in this congregation.

THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WESTBOROUGH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

December 17, 2023

Third Sunday of Advent - JOY

**The Congregation is invited to stand.*

GATHERING FOR WORSHIP

ANNOUNCEMENTS (shown online and on the sanctuary screens) 9:45 AM

INTROIT "Gloria" GLORIA
Faith Formation Singers

CHURCH BELLS TO CALL US 10:00 AM

INVITING THE WORD

WELCOME Rev. Betsy Dorsi

*CALL TO WORSHIP Lawson Jackson

One: Come, let us see this amazing thing that God has done.

Many: We listened to the prophets who foretold it.

One: Angels proclaim it.

Many: Shepherds and Kings search for it.

One: Come, let's go see.

Many: Let's find the gift God gave us, not under the tree, but in a manger.

LIGHTING THE THIRD ADVENT CANDLE – JOY The Fitzgibbons Family
Shawn, Sterling & Cora (Confirmation class)

1st Person: On this third Sunday of Advent we will relight two purple candles to remind us of God's gifts of hope and peace. Today we light the third candle, the pink one, representing joy.

(Two purple candles are lit.)

2nd Person: As we wait for Christmas, the birth of Jesus, we look forward to the joyful celebrations we will share with those we love. The prophet Zephaniah calls us to shout for joy, because God will gather together all people and renew them in love. When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the angel told the shepherds not to be afraid. The angels brought "good news of a great joy, which shall be to all people." The good news of Jesus' birth and the promise of Peace are still "tidings of great joy" for us today.

3rd Person: Paul reminds Christians, “Rejoice in God always.” The third pink candle reminds us of our joy in Jesus Christ.

(The pink Joy Candle is lit)

Let us pray together: **Thank you, God, for Your promise of joy. Help us to recognize the moments of joy in our lives, and to live joyfully so that others may come to be filled with the joy that comes from knowing Jesus Christ. Amen.**

*ADVENT RESPONSE

“One Candle Is Lit”
HYMN #128 (vs. 1,2,3)

CRADLE SONG

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (Unison)

Sebastian Moskal

Gracious God, on this joyous third Sunday of Advent, we come before You with hearts full of gratitude for the abundant blessings You shower upon us. Lord, as we begin this service, we ask You to bless us and our families and community so we may meet You in our midst. May the true meaning of Christmas fill our hearts with joy. In Jesus’ name we pray and continue in prayer using the words He taught us...

*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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever, Amen.

RECEIVING THE WORD

SONG

“Mary, Did You Know?”

Mark Lowry and Buddy Greene

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Betsy Dorsi

BEING THE CHURCH

OFFERING OUR GIFTS

Invitation: *Let us bring our offerings before God with thanksgiving!*
The morning offering will now be received.

Maciej Moskal

Offertory



“For online giving, scan QR code with your phone’s camera”

***DOXOLOGY**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly hosts: Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION (Unison)**

Maciej Moskal

Holy God, we thank You for all the gifts You give us. Please accept our gift back to You and help us use it to spread Your love to everyone we meet. Amen.

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

SCRIPTURE

Luke 1:26-35

Mateusz Moskal

**“Mary, Joseph and the Baby”
&**

Written by Tammy Waldrop

“The Wise Men and the Star”

Written by Bill Ingram

*Directed by Linda Borglund and Joseph Stillitano
Nativity Bells directed by Sue Menzel*

***CLOSING HYMN #144**

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

ST. LOUIS

***BENEDICTION**

May the love of God which sent Jesus to us, fill your hearts and minds with great joy! Go now with the blessing of God, our Creator, Redeemer, and Advocate, spreading joy everywhere you go! Amen.

***POSTLUDE**

Our Youth serve as liturgists today.

Pam Faustine and **Elizabeth Kafig** are deacons of the day.



Please join us downstairs after the service for our Cookie Walk!

PAGEANT CAST

DONKEYS Nora Hubbard
 Susanna Di Terlizzi
 Hayley Kapitz

SHEEP Louis Hight
 Jeffrey Stillitano
 Lucy Stillitano
 Kristina Di Terlizzi

WISE MEN Lawson Jackson
 Maciej Moskal
 Sebastian Moskal

ANGELS Welles Jackson
 Sabrina Caron
 Dylan McCoskery

NARRATOR Cora Fitzgibbons

DIRECTORS Linda Borglund
 Joseph Stillitano

NATIVITY BELLS:

Janet Rivard, Max Keeler, **Cam Glennon***, Kathy Leblanc, Betty Gray, Judy Powell, Donna Morgan, Sterling Fitzgibbons, Jen Keeler, **Cora Fitzgibbons***, and **Al Regnier***.

***Youth Ringers**

Prayers

New Prayers: Ron & Nancy Clark's daughter Melissa Dickinson.

Continued Prayers: Betty Barclay; Judy Oliver; Steve Lindberg; Nancy Reimann; The Lord family; Cathie Achorn's mom, Dee Mumby; Betty Grays's niece Heather and her family; Ilda & Jim Engle; Betty Simino; Roberta Di Terlizzi's mother Donata.

300th ANNIVERSARY MEETING

There will be a meeting on Monday, December 18 at 7PM. All are invited to attend. It will be in person in the Kerygma room but if someone wants to zoom in let Cathie know 508-380-8671

WESTBOROUGH FOOD PANTRY

This month, the Food Pantry is in need of cereal (all varieties), microwave popcorn, and pump soap. Donations can be placed in the white box at the side entrance to the church or the basket at the front entrance. Thank you so much for your generous donations. The Mission Team

GOT PICTURES?

It's that time of year again, when many wonderful things are happening around our church, and many of you take pictures - THANK YOU! When you EMAIL pictures to Deb and Lisa, PLEASE help us out, and don't send them with "no subject" in the subject line! The time it takes for you to type a couple of words for the subject is WAY LESS than one of us trying to search every "no subject" email for a special picture. (And please, don't text the pictures. The quality is much better through email, and again, much easier to organize/find.) Thank you! Lisa westboroucc@verizon.net and Deb deb.boucher.15@gmail.com.

Dec 17	Sunday – Advent III
10:00 AM	Worship & Christmas Pageant
COOKIE WALK AFTER WORSHIP!	
Dec 18	Monday – office closed
Noon	PCCM Board Meeting/Kerygma Room
7:00 PM	300 th Anniversary Mtg.
Dec 19	Tuesday
7–8 PM	Bell Rehearsal

Dec 20	Wednesday
6:30–7:30 PM	Choir Rehearsal
7:00 PM	Cabinet/Kerygma Rm
Dec 21	Thursday
Dec 22	Friday
Dec 23	Saturday
Dec 24	Sunday – Advent IV
10:00 AM	Worship
7:00 PM	Christmas Eve Service

December Worship Schedule

SUNDAY, DEC 24th - FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

We will gather at 10 AM to light our fourth Advent candle - LOVE! Our regular morning worship will conclude with a Hymn Sing.

SUNDAY, DEC 24th AT 7PM – CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

We will have our Family Christmas Eve service at 7pm. Invite a friend or family member to join you!

SUNDAY, DEC 31st

We will gather for worship at 10 AM on this New Year's Eve Day. Join us for a Hymn Sing!



PLEASE INVITE YOUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS TO JOIN US HERE FOR WORSHIP!

