

**First Congregational Church
Waterville United Church of Christ**

December 4, 2022

9:30 AM

reflecting the sacred

Sacred People

Advent 2: Love

"The Word became flesh and made a home among us."

John 1: 1-14 (CEB)

The Christmas season is a time when the juxtaposition of the sacred and secular feels sometimes blatantly opposed, and sometimes quite blurred. The word "sacred" points to something dedicated as "holy" and "set apart." This year, you are invited to a spiritual journey of seeing ALL things pregnant with the Holy. What could our experience of the Advent and Christmas season be like if we lived it imagining that everything is reflecting the sacred?

Words of Greeting

Mission Statement

Seeking to walk in the Way of Jesus, we are an Open and Affirming church, faithfully using who we are and what we have to serve those on the margins of our community. No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

Reflecting the Sacred

The shiny additions to our Advent and Christmas visuals remind us that we are called to reflect the sacred each and every day. "Incarnation" is a word that means that God's presence came to dwell among all people, and we believe this happened in a special way in the birth of Jesus. All creation has always been imbued with the Creator's brilliance. This season, we will remember the call to shine with this holy light.

Music for Gathering

Crossing the Threshold

Opening Hymn

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

NCH 127

Refracting the Sacred

As light passes through a medium, it can be redirected in ways that make its brilliance more visible, as in a prism. As we encounter the message today, we see the world and our own lives and loved ones in a different light, one that invites us to know more deeply the sacred nature of all things.

Time for Children

First Presentation of Scripture

Romans 15:4-13 (NRSVUE)

For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Parent of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the ancestors and that the gentiles might glorify God for God's mercy. As it is written,

"Therefore I will confess you among the gentiles and sing praises to your name";

and again they say,
"Rejoice, O gentiles, with God's people";
and again,
"Praise YHWH, all you gentiles,
and let all the peoples praise God";
and again Isaiah says,
"The root of Jesse shall come,
the one who rises to rule the gentiles;
in him the gentiles shall hope."

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Word in Music *Christmas Will Really Be Christmas*

Black Pumas

Second Presentation of Scripture

Matthew 3:1-12 (NRSVUE)

In those days, John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

"The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
'Prepare the way of the Lord;
make the paths straight.' "

Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan were going out to him, and they were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins.

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance, and do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

"I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

Sermon

Sacred People

Refilling the Sacred

We are wells of the sacred. God's presence is poured into creation in a never-ending flow of love. We enter a time of prayer that invites us to be refilled in ways that can help us pour out our love throughout the week. All we must do in this moment is open our hearts to the Holy One.

Joys & Concerns

Prayers of the Day

Prayer of our Savior *(say the one that is in your heart)*

A Traditional Version

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

A Contemporary Version

Our Creator in heaven, holy is your name. Your kingdom come. Your 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. Do not lead us into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Offering

Announcements

Reframing the Sacred

We too often think that something "sacred" is far away and not available to us. This Advent season, we are "reframing" the way we recognize the sacred reflected all around and through us. As we prepare to move into the world, we begin to reframe our view of the world and our circumstances, illuminating new ways of being the Christ (Anointed One) tangibly present.

Anointed to Sacred Time

Closing Hymn

In the Bleak Midwinter

NCH 128

Words of Blessing

Musical Blessing

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS

Rev. Ian R. Lynch - Pastor
David Dean – Soloist/Pianist
Jackie Kulik - Liturgist

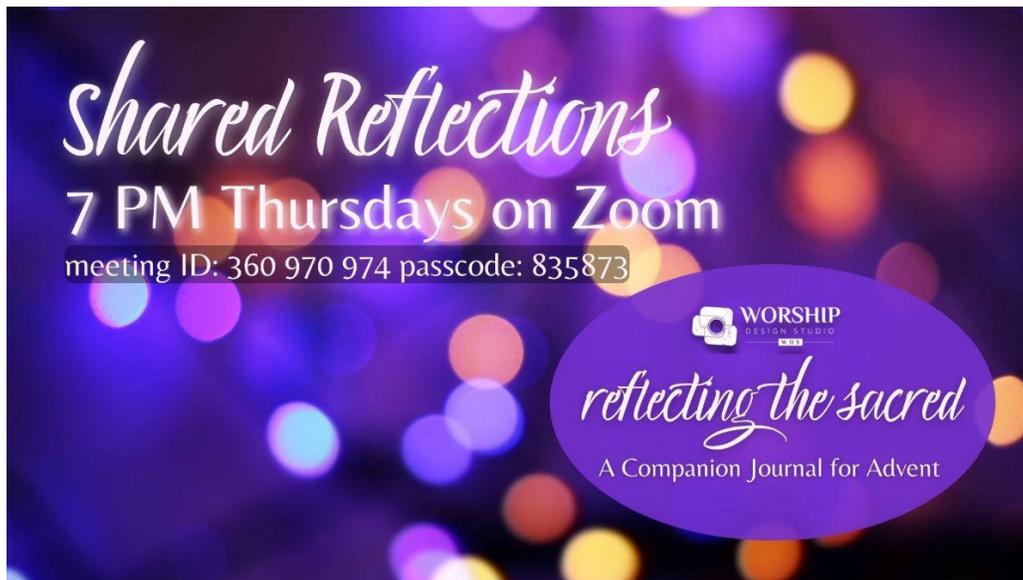
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ANNOUNCEMENTS



We will meet on Thursdays evenings to share our reflections. Whether you have read the daily reflections and kept a journal or not, you will find the gathering enriching.



Join us on Monday, Dec 5, 3pm ET for a virtual worship service with Team Global HOPE at UCC National Ministries for a Blue Christmas worship service. Blue Christmas services traditionally provide space for those who don't feel so "merry and bright" during the holiday season.

A poster for a Christmas stocking drive. The top has a teal banner with 'MERRY CHRISTMAS!' in white. Below is a string of six red stockings with various patterns. The main title is '2nd Annual Christmas Stockings for Veterans' in large, bold, black font. The text below describes the drive: 'American Legion Post #126 Vassalboro needs your help to fill 200 Christmas Stockings for Veterans at Togus. You can thank a veteran by donating personal care products to go in the Christmas Stockings. Items can be dropped off at 860 Main St. Vassalboro. For more info contact: Tom Richards, Commander or Jim Kilbride, Adjutant PO 112 North Vassalboro, ME 04962 207-616-3148 Meets 4th Monday of the Month: 5:00 pm at St. Bridget Center'.



Shopping List for December

Macaroni & Cheese, Jiffy mixes, Canned fruit, Juices in plastic containers

Food Donations may be dropped off at Pleasant Street United Methodist Church during Food Bank hours, Monday through Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. and Monday evenings 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. Cash donations may be mailed to the Waterville Area Food Bank c.o Pleasant Street United Methodist Church, 61 Pleasant St., Waterville, ME 04901

10:00 a.m. Daily Prayer Check in password

The safest and most effective way to connect to a Zoom meeting is to manually enter the Meeting ID, 914 158 897 - and then the password - 693668

If you want to try just clicking on this link with the password embedded, it should also work:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/914158897?pwd=VkEwUG5rbEdwaFB3NGJyU3NhV2hGUT09>

And you can always call in: 1 929 205 6099 US

And enter the Meeting ID: 914 158 897 Password: 693668

CHURCH STAFF and OFFICERS

Rev. Ian R. Lynch - Pastor

Sally Melcher-McKeagney, R.N. - Faith Community Nurse

Rev. Maureen Ausbrook - Starfish Village Ministry

Pete & Lora Downing - Essentials Closet

Nancy Flynn - Administrative Assistant

Bill Lee - Diaconate Chair

Carl Daiker - Treasurer

Jackie Dalton - Assistant Treasurer

Mike Seavey - Financial Secretary

Herb Oliver - Moderator

Chet Manuel - Vice-Moderator

Mary Lou Ogden - Clerk

www.watervilleucc.org

207-872-8976

Our Church Life: This Coming Week

December 4, 2022

Today, December 4	4	Second Sunday in Advent 9:30 a.m. Worship Service in-person and on Zoom and You Tube
Monday,	5	Office Closed 10:00 a.m. Daily prayer/check-in time on Zoom 11:30 a.m. Stone Soup Café in Winslow
Tuesday	6	Office Closed 10:00 a.m. Daily prayer/check-in time on Zoom
Wednesday	7	10:00 a.m. Daily prayer/check-in time on Zoom
Thursday	8	10:00 a.m. Daily prayer/check-in-time on Zoom
Friday	9	10:00 a.m. Daily prayer/check-in-time on Zoom 11:30 a.m. Stone Soup Café in Winslow
Saturday	10	10:00 a.m. Daily prayer/check-in-time
Sunday	11	Third Sunday in Advent 9:30 a.m. Worship Service in-person and on Zoom and You Tube