



WOODBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

4 Church Street
Woodbury, CT 06798

Website: www.woodburyumc.net

Office: (203) 263-4775 • Fax: (203) 263-5867

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Rev. John A. Thomason, Pastor

Woodbury United Methodist Messenger

Wednesday, December 2, 2020

Livestreaming Resumes This Sunday!

We are pleased to announce that we will begin livestreaming our worship services at the same time as in-person services (10:30am) for both video on YouTube and audio-only by telephone broadcast. Video recordings of services will also be available for later viewing. Later phone broadcasts will no longer be provided.

The options for accessing services are as follows:

- Video: Go to <http://www.woodburyumc.net>, scroll to "Sunday Morning Worship in The Sanctuary" and click the link for livestreaming. A link is also provided for archived videos for later viewing.
- Audio-only by phone: dial (425) 436-6391, enter pin with hash sign 2431819#. Note that these numbers have changed from what was used previously. Please mute your phones to eliminate background noise.

Advent, 2020

Advent marks the beginning of the new Christian Year. It is a season of four weeks including four Sundays. The term *Advent* comes from the Latin *adventus*, which means "coming." The season proclaims the comings of the Christ – whose birth we prepare to celebrate once again, who comes continually in Word and Spirit, and whose return in final victory we anticipate.

The liturgical color for Advent is blue, representing hope. The visuals in our sanctuary include an Advent wreath featuring an outer circle of three blue candles and one pink candle (signifying joy), and a central white Christ candle which is illuminated on Christmas Eve. This year, our four Confirmands – *Matthew Shupenis*, *James Levario*, *Cody Cordova*, and *Zachary Cordova* -- are lighting the outer wreath candles on the Sundays of Advent.

December 6: Second Sunday of Advent

Sacrament of Holy Communion

A NOTE TO THOSE WHO ARE PARTAKING OF COMMUNION AT HOME:

Individualized Communion kits are available in the church office through Friday. You are requested to call ahead to make an appointment to pick up your kit(s). You are also welcome to purchase and use your own elements, which will be consecrated remotely during the Communion liturgy.



Advent Candle Theme: *PEACE*

Pastor's Sermon: *The Turning Point*

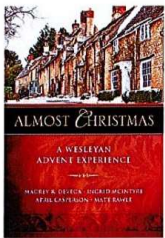
Lectionary Readings: Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8
Liturgist: Rynn Naylor Advent Candle Lighter: James Levario
Singer: Carolyn Shay

Children's Time: *Come to the Manger: Peace for Advent*, from SkitGuys
Recorded by: Tesu Beavers; Jack, Joey, and Ruby Lynch

Advent Bible Study Fellowship for Adults

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL AND STUDY



Why not experience a little John Wesley this Advent season?

In *Almost Christmas*, author and pastor Magrey deVega encourages people to follow Christ wholeheartedly during Advent, connecting the Wesleyan heritage with traditional Advent themes of...

Love, Hope, Joy, Peace!

This 4-week Advent Study & Fellowship will be held on Tuesday evenings from 6:30 – 8PM beginning December 1st. You will be able to participate online or in person (in Fellowship Hall).

Almost Christmas Advent Devotionals will also be available as an additional resource for individuals and families.

Books will be available through the church office:

Study Book - \$11

Devotional Book - \$9

Inspirational Advent Fellowship – *priceless*

For additional information contact:

WUMC church office (203-263-4775); or,

Bud Behlman (203-206-9276; budbehlman@charter.net)

Advent Study Zoom Meeting Link and other information is listed at the top of the church website for your convenience.

Visit: www.woodburyumc.net

Study Guides and Devotionals are still available at the church.

Stewardship Opportunities

Our members have received a mailing from Pastor John about a different kind of stewardship emphasis during this very different kind of year. A commitment card was enclosed requesting an indication of your financial support for WUMC during the upcoming year (regular pledge, special giving to pay down the church's mortgage, and giving to the COVID-19 Support Fund), as well as an invitation to participate in the new **Helping Hands** ministry to our community. Your prompt response would be very helpful. Please mail your card to the church office if you are unable to attend in-person worship. Thank you in advance for your spirit of generosity and service.



Helping Hands Service Corps.

Vision Statement:

Create an extended network of community volunteers for helping those with critical near-term needs, but without sufficient local families to whom they can turn.

Examples of Types of Services:

- Handyman projects (e.g., carpentry, plumbing, electrical repairs, computer troubleshooting)
- Home upkeep (e.g., cleaning, lawn cutting, snow shoveling)
- Transportation and delivery
- Baby-sitting or respite care

Please Contact: Mark Davis at mwd2010a@yahoo.com



A Reminder about our Special COVID-19 Support Fund

The Church Council has created a support fund to assist persons who have been severely impacted by the economic shutdown related to the pandemic.

- If you **need financial assistance**, please contact Pastor John (845-707-5152). Requests and donations will be kept strictly confidential.
 - If you would like to **make a donation** to the fund, you can mail a check to the church office (write "COVID-19 Support Fund" on the memo line); or you can donate online through the Breeze link on our church's website (write "COVID-19 Support Fund" in the message box). Thank you!
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Notes from the Mission & Outreach Ministry

Please see the end of this Messenger for information from *Sara Flores & Dakin Cook* in Ecuador outlining their ministry and the current needs in Ecuador. The Mission and Outreach Ministry Team will schedule a meeting in mid-January to discuss future plans for our church's participation in this ministry. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact Paul Hibbard by phone at 203-405-1005, by text at 860-488-7705, or by email at paulgyl@aol.com. Due to the current state of increases in Covid infection rates, there will not be a meeting scheduled for December.

CHRISTMAS COLLECTION DEADLINE THIS SUNDAY (12/6/20)

Items for the Woodbury Community Services Council **Santa's Workshop** need to be brought to the church no later than this **Sunday, December 6th**. (A box for donated items will be available in the entry way between the sanctuary and the office.) These items will be delivered to WCSC on Monday, December 7th.

The following items for children ages birth to 18 years are requested:

Stocking Stuffers: Example: Small toys & games, Beauty & School supplies, Small Stuffed Animals, Action Figures, Cards (items that will fit into a stocking)

Warm Winter Clothing Accessories (NEW): Example: Mittens, Gloves, Socks, and Hats

Wrapping Paper (sealed)

If you would like to give to this program and need assistance with purchase or delivery, please contact Paul Hibbard by phone at 203-405-1005, by text at 860-488-7705, or by email at paulgyl@aol.com.

Children & Youth Ministry

@ HOME RESOURCES for continued Christian Education

- <https://www.cokesburykids.com/free-resources>
- <https://www.nyac.com/childrensministries>
- Scripture Reading: Mark 1:1-8 John the Baptist Prepares the Way

Children & Youth Ministry Programming

- Sunday, 12/6 Confirmation Class at 6:30 pm.
 - If you haven't already done so, feel free to pick up the Advent in a bag Sunday School series bags in the church office. Before you open bag two on Sunday, watch Meg's Sunday School video on the WUMC Facebook page on the theme of PEACE. Don't forget to light the second candle of your own Advent wreath that you made last week with Mom or Dad. Enjoy the crafts and items in the bag. If you finished the picture of HOPE, don't forget to send Meg a picture of it!
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Kudo Korner

Thanks to the team of talented volunteers who decorated our sanctuary for Advent: *Mollie Bodwell, Emilie Cole, Laurie Cole, Theron Kissinger, Rynn Naylor, and Venetia and Morgan Phillippe*. The results are spectacular and add greatly to our Advent worship experience.

Thanks to *Jay Hockenberry* and his carpentry skills in crafting 2 window inserts utilized as part of our positive ventilation protocol.

Congratulations to *Morgan Phillippe*, who received notification on Wednesday, from East Central University in Ada, OK, that she has been accepted to begin her college journey. Morgan will be attending ECU, which is also Venetia and Levi's alma mater. Go Tigers!

Thanks to last Sunday's worship leaders: *Garrett Walkup*, liturgist; *Sarah Kate, Grace, and Anna Walkup*, singers; *Bradyn and Rowan Boisseau, Mary Grace Styblo, and Lydia Temple*, Children's Time.

The Prayer Corner:

Congratulations to *Carol Hennessey* upon the birth of a great-grandson, *Cooper Paul Hutter*, on November 25 at Danbury Hospital. The proud parents are *Jonathan Hutter* (Carol's grandson) and *Natalie Bruce*, who worshiped regularly with WUMC before the pandemic shut down our in-person services. Cooper's middle name is a remembrance and tribute to his late great-grandfather, *Paul Hennessey*.

Please remember our Confirmands: *Cody Cordova, Zachary Cordova, James Levario, Matthew Shupenis*; their adult leaders: *Catherine Mason, Meg Temple, John Thomason*; and their mentors: *Mike Boisseau, Mollie Cole, Rev. Paul Hibbard, Carolyn Shay*.

Upcoming chemotherapy and surgery: *Mary Wilkins*, sister of *Barb Hunt* (Rochester, NY)

Recovering at home: *Gary McClendon; Ally Roche; Steve Thomas; Carol Hennessey; Paige LeBlanc*, mother of *Jessie Lynch* (Manchester, CT); *Dominic Vaiuso*, father of *Karen Williams* (Newtown); *Robert Ayers*, father of *Tacy Nettleton* (Woodstock, GA); *Carl Hinkle*, father of *Toby McGrath* (Greensburg, PA); *Donna Louise Burke*, friend of *Kathy Craig*; *Peter Gallagher*, father of *Jen Carnes* (Brookfield, CT); *Lou Calabrese* (husband of *Lynn Ramsden-Calabrese*); *Jane King*, mother of *Stephen King* and mother-in-law of *Joann King* (Sarasota, FL); *Antonio Stillitano*, grandson of *Paul Hatch*

Outpatient treatments: *Jackie and John Fleming; Dave Davison*, father-in-law of *Gary McClendon*; *Stephanie Galaburri*, friend of *Sandy Carbonaro*; *Will Styblo*, nephew of *Jim Styblo* and *Catherine Mason* (Franklin, TN)

Homebound members: *Florence Brown, Linda Bailey*

Please continue to remember: *Jean Lilly*, mother of *Meg Temple* (Cincinnati, OH), *Manny Gesh, Jane True, Blair Feller, Marilyn Bender, Ryan DeRidder and family, Laura & Stuart Brush, Janet Grant* (sister of *Betty Lines*).



If you would like to send someone a birthday card, please see our website @ www.woodburyumc.net for this month's birthday listing. Reminder that we are placing flowers on the altar again so let us know if you want to sign up for a particular date.

HOUSEKEEPING NOTES FROM THE OFFICE. . .

HANDICAPPED PARKING - - these are the three spaces outside the office doors (Church Street Entrance). **Please do NOT park there unless you have a handicapped parking tag. If you do park there, please be sure to leave enough room for the people using the handicapped ramp.**

❖ **Office Hours Tuesday thru Friday 9 am – 3 pm.** During the COVID-19 LOCKDOWN – Office visits are by appointment only. Please be sure to have your face covered if entering the building for everyone's health safety. The answering machine will be checked daily; however, if you have a pastoral emergency, you can call Pastor John Thomason @ (203) 263-7575. Thank you!

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION UPDATES???

Please continue to send any changes in names, addresses, phone numbers, emails, etc. Please send them to wumc@woodburyumc.net. This is also important to keep track of any of our college students as well!!!

It's Time to order your Poinsettias for the Christmas Holiday
Monday, December 7th is deadline to order



Each Christmas season, our sanctuary is beautifully decorated with holiday trimmings and poinsettias. As the season approaches, we are now taking orders for the poinsettias, which may be in honor of, in celebration of, or in memory of one or more loved ones. A list of acknowledgments will be printed in the church bulletin on Sunday, December 20 and Christmas Eve.

Poinsettias are \$12.00 each. We encourage you to take your flower(s) home with you after the service on Christmas Eve.

You may order your flower(s) by filling out the form below, and placing it in the collection plate, or returning it to the church office accompanied by a check or cash for total amount (a folder marked Poinsettias Orders is available on the office mail station). All checks should be made out to **Woodbury United Methodist Church. *All orders must be placed no later than Monday, DECEMBER 7TH.***

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

In honor/celebration/memory of:

(If more space is required, please attach a separate piece of paper)

_____ Red poinsettia _____ Quantity
_____ White poinsettia _____ Quantity



Please be sure to list all the necessary information so follow-up calls do not have to be made. Thanks!

Mission Statement of the
Woodbury United Methodist Church

We are a welcoming Christian fellowship who celebrate and share God's love with everyone.

We seek a closer relationship with Jesus Christ. Inspired by His example, we strive to be God's hands in this world.

Empowered by God's word, we proclaim the Gospel and serve through worship, study, mission, and community support.

Love is Spoken Here!



DECEMBER BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS AT WUMC

Heidi Reidies	Dec 5 th
Chris Shay	Dec 6 th
Amanda Cloud & Sarah Schivera	Dec 8 th
Karen Fimmano	Dec 9 th
Jackie Fleming	Dec 11 th
Rowan Boisseau	Dec 14 th
Laura Brush & Pete Vindigni	Dec 15 th
Christine Shupenis	Dec 16 th
Summer Sledzieski & Sherry Swanhall	Dec 26 th
Paul Hibbard	Dec 29 th
Barbara Rego	Dec 30 th

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU ALL,
BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS ARE ON THEIR WAY!**

The Community Services Council of Woodbury



Santa's Workshop



needs your help to provide a fun holiday for the
children of local families in need
(Ages birth to 18 years)

**The following donations are requested for the
2020 Holiday Season....**



Stocking Stuffers

*Example: Small Toys & Games, Beauty & School Supplies,
Small Stuffed Animals, Action Figures, Cards,
Items that will fit into a stocking*



Warm winter clothing accessories (new)



Example: Mittens, Gloves, Socks and Hats

Wrapping Paper (sealed)

*Please note, for donations of larger gifts please visit New Morning Market
& the Woodbury Public Library where "Giving Trees" are displayed.*

Questions
203-510-9905

Caring for Bethlehem

Share Some Holiday Joy

Holiday Gift Tree

at True Value of Bethlehem

November 1 to December 12

**Join Caring for Bethlehem to
Provide a Gift for a Child this Holiday Season!**

1. Pick a card from the Gift Tree at True Value.
2. Purchase the gift.
3. Deliver the gift with the card attached to True Value.
4. Your gift will be delivered to a family in time for the holidays.

And Share the Joy!

Your gift will bring smiles this season.

Caring for Bethlehem

PO Box 5, Bethlehem, CT 06751

www.CFBethlehem.org

Friends@CFBethlehem.org

Partnership in God's Mission for Ecuador 2020 - 2021

We are thankful to God because there are Methodist churches and friends like you, willing to be part of God's mission in Ecuador. We appreciate your prayers, VIM teams, volunteers and your support through offerings and gifts. We thank God that we are not alone, we all are part of the Body of Christ.

If you feel called to partner with the Evangelical United Methodist Church of Ecuador, the projects can be supported by your church, family, Sunday school class or by individuals through an approved Advance Project of the UMC - Global Ministries. Information on how to give can be found at:
<https://umcmmission.org/5219-2/>

Please consider supporting the priorities of the Ecuadorian church:

Priority # 1. Achieve a Worthy Salary for Methodist Pastors in Ecuador **Pastoral Support in Ecuador #3021092**

<https://advance.umcmmission.org/p-409-pastoral-support-in-ecuador.aspx>

As of January 2021, the Methodist Church of Ecuador will not have sufficient designated funds for 12 pastors. The Church needs \$7,000 per year to cover a basic salary and social benefits for each pastor. Help us to give a worthy support for the pastors.

Priority # 2. Support Integrated Ministries for Children **Integral Ministry for Children, Ecuador #3021530**

<https://advance.umcmmission.org/p-456-integral-ministry-for-children-ecuador.aspx>

Help us to support programs that promote the integrated development of children in need, especially those in marginalized urban neighborhoods and rural indigenous communities of Ecuador. Through its local churches the Methodist Church of Ecuador is currently reaching around 2,500 children and their families.

Priority # 3. Construction of Churches and Mission Facilities **Building Churches and Parsonages - Ecuador #3021546**

<https://advance.umcmmission.org/p-462-building-churches-and-parsonages-ecuador.aspx>

Four new congregations are working to buy land and build sanctuaries and Sunday school classrooms; the El Sembrador Methodist School where 200 children from Pastocalle and surrounding indigenous communities receive education and grow in faith, needs help to finish construction of new classrooms.

If you like, you can define, and write us of a specific project/ local church for your donation.

After sending your gift, please be sure to send an email with details to:

iemue@hotmail.com and Sara ssdd16@hotmail.com.

May God bless you,

*Rev. Silvio Cevallos
Bishop of the IEMUE*

*Ptor. Freddy Balseca
National Treasurer*

*Sara Flores & Dakin Cook
UMC-GBGM Missionaries*

November 2020 Newsletter from Ecuador

We pray for our countries and the world

In these times of pandemic and social and economic crisis, and in the midst of racial, social and political crisis, we pray that the love of our creator can be reborn in humanity. We pray for our hearts to be open to the wisdom of the word of God. We remember Paul's words to the Ephesians in chapter 4:2 **"Be humble and meek, and tolerant and patient with one another, in love."**

The Pandemic has shown us that humanity is fragile, and that we need each other. Quarantine has shown us that loneliness and isolation hurt us, and we long to see family and friends again. May the holy spirit work in our hearts and the hearts of our rulers and people for better days.

COVID in Ecuador

Ecuador continues to experience the impact of COVID 19. Ecuador has instituted a stoplight system of restrictions; red, yellow, and green depending on national parameters. Most of the country is now on a yellow status. The yellow status allows restaurants to open at 50% of seating capacity, permission to circulate in private vehicles 4 days a week according to license plate numbers, opening of all businesses who use bio-secure procedures, social distancing and mandatory use of masks in public. So, life is slowly starting to function more fully.

Hospitals are functioning below full capacity and the situation is better, this is an improvement over the early days of the virus when hospitals and cemeteries in Guayaquil were completely overwhelmed in April and June. As in all the world, Ecuador continues to live in sorrow for the those who have died and those with no financial resources due to the virus. We thank God that the situation is much better, and the case numbers are down although we are starting to see a slight increase in cases in the Guayaquil area.

During this crisis, the pastors and leaders of the Methodist Church have been working via virtual media to provide spiritual guidance, Sunday school activities and VBS, health advice and orientation in prevention of diseases, and helping to distribute food supplies and hygiene kits to provide for the physical needs of their communities.



Family Receiving Food - Quevedo

As of early October, churches are now authorized to open for services as long as the required protocol is complied with. Now, almost 15 of the 24 Methodist congregations are open for limited Sunday worship. Most of the churches in urban areas like Quito, continue their activities in virtual mode, at least until December.

In Pijal and El Prado and our other children's ministries, full weekly meetings with the children remain suspended. Since October they started to receive small groups of 10 children, accompanying them with their schoolwork and providing spiritual and emotional support. In September, the children started school activities in a virtual mode throughout the country and needs are being felt more. Most children do not have an internet connection at home and must use cell phones to receive instruction, to do this they have to buy prepaid cards for data service. During this time of economic crisis, the cost of materials weighs on families and your support is crucial, thank you for this.



Service for Graduating Youth in Pijal

2021 VIM teams to Ecuador

We hope that by 2021 improvements will be made in the fight against COVID, and that travel will be allowed worldwide. It will all depend on the global situation and travel regulations. Today, international travelers can enter Ecuador with the presentation of a negative COVID PCR test, if the test is positive, a 14-day isolation is required. With confidence in the improvement of the world situation, we suggest that you include your trip in your plans for 2021.

Our work from home

During the quarantine we started to work from home virtually, supporting the work of the local churches. It has been a very rich time to create networks of support among pastors and leaders, using creative ways of producing worship, devotionals, and providing spiritual and emotional accompaniment activities in these times of anguish and uncertainty. An important task has been weekly meetings between the pastors and the spiritual and psycho-emotional accompaniment team.

The Church has also developed basic training courses for local leaders in Crisis and Consolation, accompaniment for couples, health, and prevention of domestic violence.

During these months we have been able to support many of our pastors' families and members of congregations in situations of crises related to disease, deaths, providing support. Once we had permission to do so, we could physically visit some of the pastors and churches to coordinate solidarity campaigns and distribute COVID test kits as well as accompany them in special limited events.



Sara Family Visit



Dakin Testing for Covid

Our stay in Ecuador

Just this week, Global Ministries confirmed the extension of Sara's current missionary assignment by 3 months, December through February 2021. This is in consideration that a new missionary placement will be approved for the Methodist Church of Ecuador, for which they will be considering Sara's application. We have prayed and felt the call to stay in Ecuador for a few more years. There is a good possibility that this will come to pass as we wait and pray for God's will. We think that our stay will be approved for 3 more years, if not, we will be helping out as volunteers through the summer of 2021. In this way we will be able to support the VIM groups and the completion of projects as well as the strengthening of Church programs.

We want to thank you for the significant support you have provided for us, especially missionary salary support this makes our work possible. We will still need your support through the end this year and ask that you consider maintaining it.

Attached are the urgent needs to support the mission of the Methodist Church in Ecuador through the Advance, if you need more information to develop an alternative Christmas gift campaign or individual donations, please write to us. A special and urgent need that you may consider is the support for pastor's salaries, this is much more important during this pandemic.

During this time of crisis, we pray for you. May God strengthen us in his love for all humanity.

Sara and Dakin

Quito-Ecuador, Nov 9, 2020