



WOODBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

4 Church Street  
Woodbury, CT 06798

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Rev. John A. Thomason, Pastor

## Woodbury United Methodist Messenger

Wednesday, February 3, 2021

February 7

Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany

Sacrament of Holy Communion

Worshippers at home are warmly invited to share in Holy Communion this Sunday. You may provide your own elements or request Communion kits from the church office. Your Bread and Cup will be consecrated along with those of in-person worshippers.

**Pastor's Sermon: *God's Forgotten Attribute***

**Lectionary Texts: Isaiah 40:21-31; Psalm 147:1-11, 22c  
1 Corinthians 9:16-23; Mark 1:29-39**

**Liturgist: Anna Richardson    Reader: Grace Richardson  
Singers and Children's Time leaders:  
Anna, Grace and Rick Richardson**

February 14: Transfiguration Sunday

Worship Led by NYAC

On **Sunday, February 14**, Woodbury UMC will share in a **joint online worship service** with other congregations in the New York Annual Conference. **PLEASE NOTE: Worship will not be held in our sanctuary that day.** A link for participating in the service being livestreamed from White Plains, New York, will be provided in next week's *Messenger*.

Also see the last pages of this Messenger with a memorandum from *Bishop Bickerton* regarding State Guidelines for Re-Opening churches. More information will follow.

# February 17: Ash Wednesday

**Ash Wednesday** ushers in the holy season of Lent. This year, WUMC will faithfully observe Ash Wednesday, but do so in a slightly different ways.

- Following the pattern of our recent Prayer Vigils, an outdoor service will be offered in the fenced-in courtyard area on Main Street from 7:00 – 7:10 PM, followed by a full service in the sanctuary from 7:15 – 8:00 PM.
- Instead of the usual imposition of ashes, worshipers in both settings will be offered small pieces of burlap marked with a cross as a sign of penitence and mortality.

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**Special Note – Open floral opportunities for many Sundays throughout the remaining of 2021. Please contact the office if interested.**

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## Please Join Us for Livestreamed Worship Events

Livestreaming provides an opportunity for all of us to experience worship at the same time, either at home or in-person. Worshipers at home may join us by video on YouTube or audio-only by telephone broadcast. Video recordings of services are also archived on the church's website for later viewing. Later phone broadcasts are no longer provided.

The options for accessing services electronically remain the same:

- **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#.

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## BIBLE 101 CONTINUES

The winter **Bible Study Fellowship** for adults is an introduction to our primary resource for Christian belief and practice -- the Bible. Pastor John is leading us in exploring why the Bible is so important for people of faith, how the Scriptures were written and compiled, and how Christians can read and study the Bible for maximum benefit. During the final session, participants will be invited to share their favorite Bible verses and passages.

The class is being offered on **Tuesday evenings through February 16 from 6:30 to 8:00 PM**. Weather permitting, group participants will be able to gather in-person in Fellowship Hall, but on-line participation will be available for all sessions. Go to the WUMC website for the link.

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## A Pause in Confirmation Classes

By common agreement of Confirmation teachers, parents, and mentors, virtual meetings of our 2020-'21 Confirmation class have been discontinued. Classes will resume when it is feasible to meet in-person. Our four Confirmands – *Cody Cordova*, *Zachary Cordova*, *James Levario*, and *Matthew Shupenis* – have participated faithfully in our virtual sessions, but we feel they deserve a richer Confirmation experience including face-to-face instruction, fun activities, and group bonding. Thanks to all who are involved in Confirmation, and we look forward to continuing this process as soon as possible.

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## Volunteers Needed for Woodbury Food Bank

**February** is WUMC's month to provide volunteers for the **Food Bank** sponsored by the Community Services Council of Woodbury. Openings are available on all four Fridays of the month – February 5, 12, 19, and 26. Please call the church office or Mission and Outreach Ministry Team chair *Rev. Paul Hibbard* (860-488-7705) to sign up.



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## 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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## Children & Youth Ministry

@ HOME RESOURCES for continued Christian Education

- <https://www.cokesburykids.com/free-resources>
- <https://www.nyac.com/childrensministries>
- <https://ministry-to-children.com/>
- Scripture Reading: Mark [1:29-39](#)

### Children & Youth Ministry Programming

- Be on the lookout for information on our Lenten Sunday School series this February. If you would like to participate, please contact Meg or Catherine.

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## Kudo Korner

**Thanks** to last Sunday's worship leaders: *Kate Keeler*, liturgist; *Garrett Walkup*, Children's Time leader; *Matt Bodwell*, *Rod Carnes*, and *Kate Keeler*, singers.

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## The Prayer Corner:

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

**Recovering from surgery:** *John Fleming* (out-patient procedure on January 29 at Waterbury Hospital); *Josh Harwood* (out-patient procedure on January 29); *Lynn Cullen* (out-patient procedure on February 3).

**Recovering at home:** *the Cole/Lowman/Bodwell* family; *Gary McClendon*; *Steve Thomas*; *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:** *Dave Brencher*, *Bob Asman*, *Mary Wilkins*, sister of *Barb Hunt* (Rochester, NY); *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:** relatives of *Rev. Betty Lines* who are seriously ill: niece *Sharon Parish* (hospice care in Idaho); and brother-in-law *Stephen Lines* (recovering from a stroke in Florida); *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](http://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.

**\*\*\* Update on February Birthdays** - - Unfortunately a few people were left off the birthday listing last week and we want to be sure to include them in the celebrations!

*Rick Richardson* – February 11  
*Tyler & Victoria Williams* – February 24

## **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 [woodmc@woodburyumc.net](mailto:woodmc@woodburyumc.net). This is also important to keep track of any of our college students as well!!!

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## **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!**



## THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Thomas J. Bickerton, Resident Bishop | New York Area Episcopal Office  
Robert M. Walker, Assistant to the Bishop | Pamela Bowe-Tabbs, Administrative Assistant to the Bishop

20 Soundview Ave., White Plains, NY 10606 | 914-615-2221 | bishop@nyac.com

February 1, 2021

### MEMORANDUM

TO: All Pastors, Lay Leaders, & Council Chairpersons serving in Connecticut

FROM: Thomas J. Bickerton, Resident Bishop  
Tim Riss, New York/Connecticut District Superintendent  
Alpher Sylvester, Connecticut District Superintendent

RE: State Guidelines for Re-Opening

Dear Friends & Colleagues,

Grace and peace to each of you. We pray that this letter finds each of you well, safe, and blessed.

As many of you are aware, on January 30th Governor Ned Lamont released a statement that it is his intent this week to lift the State of Connecticut's restriction on the number of people who can gather for in-person worship services. The basis of this decision is related to legal challenges on limitations placed on houses of worship in other states including New York.

When the legal challenges for restrictions on worship attendance overturned Andrew Cuomo's decisions in New York, I respectfully indicated to our churches there that it is my firm belief that churches should not be granted exemptions from mass gatherings due to the fact that any large gathering of human beings, religious or not, opens the door to potential infections. This is true for large weddings, funerals, restaurants, movie theaters, etc. No one is immune to contracting the virus.

This impending decision in Connecticut poses a noteworthy challenge for all of our United Methodist Churches in the state. This week, you will be legally permitted to resume full in-person worship in your local church. However, there still remains a significant portion of your congregants who have not yet received the vaccine, are in vulnerable age categories, or have pre-existing health conditions. The health and safety of our people should take priority over any permission granted due to fears over legal challenges.

As the bishop and cabinet members of the churches within Connecticut, we maintain the right to continue to enforce the clear and well-crafted protocols and guidelines for re-opening our houses of worship. We are writing today to urge you to err on the side of caution, to maintain the strict protocols/requirements for re-opening, to take into account the vulnerable populations of persons within your churches, and to carefully weigh and balance the degree to which, if at all, you choose to re-open your church for unrestricted worship and activity.

We are also aware of the pressures that many of you have felt from many sides to quickly move past this pandemic and, as a result, tone down the precautions necessary for us to continue to provide health and safety for the people we love. Please remain focused on the guidelines we have provided and know that we will support you in whatever way we can.

In order to maintain knowledge of what is happening in each of our churches, we will be contacting each of you to get clarity on the decisions you are considering in light of this latest development. We are simply doing this in order to understand, with transparency, what you are thinking and to offer our assistance where needed in your decision-making process. As always, we stand ready to help in whatever way needed.

While we are all eager to get beyond this pandemic, there are still critical days which lie ahead that demand careful consideration and navigation. Let us commit ourselves to being intentional and deliberate as we face these challenging days. And may we always seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit as we move forward in faith.

The Journey Continues, . . .

**Thomas J. Bickerton**  
Resident Bishop

**Timothy Riss**  
District Superintendent

**Alpher Sylvester**  
District Superintendent