

UU Church of Saco and Biddeford

Saco, Maine

December 17, 2023

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The Little Tree That Could – December 17

Please help our *The Tree of Hope*. Today, after church, please take a few items from the basket by the door and attach them to the clips you'll find hanging from the tree. You can replenish hanging items anytime you are at the church! Thank you!

Share the Plate – December – Hope Squad

We are sharing our plate for the month of December with the Hope Squad. The mission of the Hope Squad is to see those who are invisible; to hear those who have no voice, to reinforce the infinite value and worth of each person we meet by providing a compassionate ministry of presence, needed resources, and hope to those living on the streets of Maine through mobile outreach."

Hannaford Gift Cards

Ellie L. will be selling Hannaford Gift Cards in the Parish Hall on Sundays after church. If you buy your groceries with a Hannaford card, the church receives 5%. Please enter the Nursery one person at a time to purchase your cards.

Please e-mail announcements to Brian in the church office (uuchurch@zwi.net) by 8 AM the Wednesday prior to the Sunday they are to appear. Announcements will not be carried over to the next week unless you notify us no later than Wednesday. Thanks.

Printed on recycled paper

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TODAY IN OUR WORSHIP:

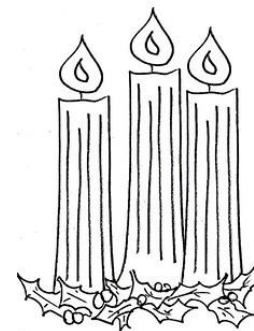
Mystery in our Midst **Rev. Lori Whittemore**

Today, Rev. Lori will be leading our worship for the third Sunday of Advent. We will be lighting the Peace candle today as we explore mystery and solstice together.

NEXT SUNDAY – December 24

Christmas Eve **Rev. Lori Whittemore & Rev. Niki Norman**

Join us for an afternoon of music and togetherness as we usher in Christmas. This will be at 4:00 PM. There will **NOT** be a morning service on Christmas Eve.



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You are invited to please sit quietly during the gathering music

Greetings & Announcements – Brian Dustin

Sounding the Singing Bowl

Prelude – Paul Benya

You are invited to light a candle of remembrance.

Words of Welcome

Responsive Reading #589 *Peace*

Advent

Lighting the Candle of Peace – Randa Thomas

***Hymn #235** *Deck the Hall with Boughs of Holly*

Lighting of the Chalice

This is our sacred promise:

To gather together in peace

To seek truth in love

To serve human need

So that all shall grow in harmony with the divine.

Our Covenant

Greeting Your Neighbor

Special Music *Do You Hear What I Hear?*

– Patrick Freeman

Sharing from the Heart (*Joys and Concerns*)

Prayer #123 *Spirit of Life*

Spirit of Life, come unto me;

Sing in my heart, all the stirrings of compassion,

Blow in the wind, rise in the sea,

Move in the hand, giving life the shape of justice.

Roots hold me close, wings set me free.

Spirit of Life, come to me, come to me.

Story for All Ages *The Shortest Day* – Susan Cooper

***Hymn #37** *God Who Fills the Universe*

Reading

– Diana Foulds

Message *Mystery in our Midst* – Rev. Lori Whittemore

The Work of This Church – Offertory

Share the Plate – Hope Squad

***Song of Gratitude and Celebration**

From all that dwell below the skies,

Let faith and hope and love arise.

Let beauty, truth and good be sung,

Through ev'ry land, by ev'ry tongue. Amen.

***Extinguish the Chalice**

As we release this flame

From its faithful service today

We allow the spark in each of us to burn on;

To warm our compassion,

To fire our delight

To light our paths,

Today, tomorrow and always.

***Hymn #226** *People, Look East*

Closing Words *Yuletide Blessing*

Special Music *Little Drummer Boy* – Patrick Freeman

Postlude

***Please stand, as you are comfortable.**

Thanks for making our worship possible:

Ushers –

Flowers – Sandra Hendrickson

Coffee Hour – Edite Kroll & Keith Walker

Hearing assistance devices and large-print hymnals are available. Please ask an usher.