



**THE BELL TREE**  
AN MCCC PUBLICATION

*A Newsletter for the Month of*  
**DECEMBER 2022**

*The Mount Carmel Congregational Church*  
*(A United Church of Christ)*  
3285 Whitney Avenue, Hamden, CT 06518

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## **“The Advent Wreath: Explained”**

*A Reflection by Aren Alberico*

Well, it's that time of the year again, that time where we prepare for the celebration of Christ's birth and for the liturgical year to come. Much like Lent, Advent is a time of personal reflection, and what better way to reflect on the messages of Advent than the quintessential symbol of this liturgical season: the Advent Wreath! As you may already know, our very own Advent Wreath was graciously donated to the Church by members of the Hospitality Committee, and acts as a symbol of the various themes and lessons of Advent. Every part of the wreath is symbolic of some aspect of Advent, even including the wreath itself, which is said to symbolize the continuous, interconnected, and eternal life which God has shared with us through his Son. However, the majority of the Wreath's symbolisms lie within its four colorful candles. Each week, a candle is lit to remind us of one of **four** central themes.

While other traditions may have different meanings for each of their candles, the UCC celebrates the four candles of **Hope**, **Peace**, **Love**, and **Joy**. First comes **Hope**, symbolizing our anticipation of the coming Messiah, which was foretold to us through the prophets. During the week of Hope, we should reflect on our expectations of this coming year, and what expectations God has for each of us. Next comes the candle of **Peace**, that being the Peace of God's presence among us. During the week of Peace, we should reflect on what brings us Peace in our lives, and how we can achieve Peace through prayer and worship. On the third week, we celebrate the **Love** of Jesus Christ, who was born so that we could become vessels of His love to all. During the week of Love, we should reflect on how we can share the Love of Christ with all people, even those people with whom we disagree or have issues with. Finally, on the fourth week, we reflect on the message of **Joy**, that being the Joy of Christ's birth, and Joy of God's presence among us. During the week of Joy, we should remind ourselves of the joys that we have experienced in the past year and give thanks to God for his many gifts. While there is still so much more to say about the themes and symbolism of Advent, I hope that you enjoyed this brief overview of the season, and I hope that it can guide you in your own journey of reflection. Last but not least, I wish you all a Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year!

# DECEMBER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

*Please join every Sunday at 10am in the Church for service! Note: Weekly scripture readings are subject to change.*

<p><b><u>December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022</u></b>  <b>Holy Communion – 2022 Budget Meeting</b>  <i>Second Sunday of Advent (Peace)</i>  <b>Scripture:</b> Romans 15: 4-13                            Psalm 72: 1-7, 18-19                            Matthew 3: 3-6  <b>Sermon:</b> Reverend Jake Miles Joseph</p>	<p><b><u>December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022</u></b>  <i>Third Sunday of Advent (Love)</i>  <b>Scripture:</b> Isaiah 35: 1-10                            Psalm 146: 5-10                            James 5: 7-10                            Matthew 11: 2-11  <b>Sermon:</b> Reverend Daniel Schlorff</p>																				
<p><b><u>December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022</u></b>  <i>Fourth Sunday of Advent (Joy)</i>  <b>Scripture:</b> Isaiah 7:10-16                            Psalm 80: 1-7,17-19                            Matthew 1: 18-25  <b>Sermon:</b> “Fatherhood”                            Aren Alberico</p>	<p><b><u>December 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022</u></b>  <b>Christmas Eve Communion Service</b>  <b>**Starts at 4pm**</b>  <b>Scripture:</b> Isaiah 9: 2-7                            Titus 2: 11-14                            Luke 2: 3-14, (15-20)  <b>Minister:</b> Reverend Susan Owen</p>																				
<p><b><u>December 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022</u></b>  <b>Christmas at Christ the Good Shepherd</b>  <i>We have been invited by Reverend Joshua Sullivan to worship with Christ the Good Shepherd the Lutheran Church, located at <u>600 Shepard Avenue, Hamden, CT 06514</u>. Service will begin at 10am. More information to come!</i></p>	<p><i>Will include Scripture Readings, Singing of Carols, and a Communion Service led by Reverend Susan Owen. Music will be provided by the Bell Choir and Leon Fiftal will be the organist for the evening.</i></p>																				
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS</u></b>  <i>Happy Birthday Wishes Go to the Following:</i></p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr><td>Jane Stolzenberg</td><td>December 5<sup>th</sup></td></tr> <tr><td>Al Stolzenberg</td><td>December 6<sup>th</sup></td></tr> <tr><td>Bev Jurkiewicz</td><td>December 6<sup>th</sup></td></tr> <tr><td>Nathan Kroon</td><td>December 10<sup>th</sup></td></tr> <tr><td>Rachel Kroon</td><td>December 10<sup>th</sup></td></tr> <tr><td>Helen Spencer</td><td>December 12<sup>th</sup></td></tr> <tr><td>Nancy Olson</td><td>December 12<sup>th</sup></td></tr> <tr><td>Bill Copeland</td><td>December 16<sup>th</sup></td></tr> <tr><td>Carillon Copeland</td><td>December 16<sup>th</sup></td></tr> <tr><td>Leon Fiftal</td><td>December 28<sup>th</sup></td></tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">If you would like to add your name to our birthday list, please contact our office.</p>	Jane Stolzenberg	December 5 <sup>th</sup>	Al Stolzenberg	December 6 <sup>th</sup>	Bev Jurkiewicz	December 6 <sup>th</sup>	Nathan Kroon	December 10 <sup>th</sup>	Rachel Kroon	December 10 <sup>th</sup>	Helen Spencer	December 12 <sup>th</sup>	Nancy Olson	December 12 <sup>th</sup>	Bill Copeland	December 16 <sup>th</sup>	Carillon Copeland	December 16 <sup>th</sup>	Leon Fiftal	December 28 <sup>th</sup>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Protocols for In-Person Worship</u></b></p> <p><b>Masks are optional for Church Worship.</b>          You can find our updated protocols on in-person worship by visiting our website at <a href="https://mccucc.tiny.us/protocols">https://mccucc.tiny.us/protocols</a>. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.</p>
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## Call for 2022 Budget Meeting

The Mount Carmel Congregational Church Annual Budget Meeting will be held immediately after church worship on Sunday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,  
Beverly Jurkiewicz  
Church Clerk

**\*\*Please note, we need a quorum of 25 or more members in order to vote on the budget.\*\***

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## Thank You

Thank you to Tom Duffy for directing the Bell Choir and to Leon Fiftal during my recovery.  
-Lynda Pedersen

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## Outreach

Thanksgiving Food Drive. Our food drive was very successful again this year. We were able to fill 31 bags of food and we delivered 13 to the VNA and 18 to the Keefe Center. There was also extra food for our food bank containers. Thanks to all who contributed with food and monetary donations, and to the drivers and people who helped load the cars. I want to tell you from experience how important it is that we do this every year. For the last several years that I have dropped off food at Keefe, I am usually greeted with many people coming out to help unload my car. It's pretty crazy there with lots of drop offs going on at the same time. This year when I got there, there was already a line of about 20 people standing out in the cold with bags waiting to pick up food. That really got to me. Some of you know that there were some mishaps with the turkeys and that I had to scramble to find 3 more at the last minute. After all the frustration, it really put things in perspective when I saw the people in line. So just know that everything we do, no matter how much or how little does really help others!

Hamden Kids Holiday Toy Drive. Once again, the Keefe Center is collaborating with several Hamden Community Services to provide toys to over 500 children during the holiday. You may drop off your unwrapped toys at the Hamden Mart Parking Lot in front of Aldi's on the following Saturdays: Dec 3<sup>rd</sup>, Dec 10<sup>th</sup>, and Dec 17<sup>th</sup> from 10am-2pm. If you wish, place them on the stage and the Outreach Committee will deliver them. See the enclosed flyer for a list of suggestions.

VNA Gifts. We will be donating wrapped gifts to the VNA again this year. The gift tags are on the 3 small Christmas trees on the stage. The tags are numbered and labeled. Please let Debbie know what tag(s) you are taking. Bring in your unwrapped gift and tag by Dec 18<sup>th</sup>. You may leave them on the stage. Outreach helpers will wrap them and deliver on Monday, December 19<sup>th</sup>.

Christmas Fund. Our next church-wide mission project is The Christmas Fund. The monies collected here help "provide pension and health premium supplementation to low-income retired church workers, emergency assistance to clergy families in need, and Christmas checks to hundreds of annuitants, as administered by the Pension Boards." Please make your check out to Mt Carmel and put "Christmas Fund" in the memo. Cash or check Donations are due by Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup>. Thank you.

-Debbie Wooley

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## **FINANCIAL REPORT: OCTOBER 2022**

Following is the financial report for October 2022. If you have any questions, Ellen can be reached at [treasurer@mccucc.com](mailto:treasurer@mccucc.com).

<b>Income:</b>	Pledges and Offerings:	\$7,022.00
	Other Income:	\$4,626.00
	Total Income:	\$11,648.00
<b>Expenses:</b>	Total Expenses:	\$9,301.00
<b>Net Income:</b>		\$2,347.00

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## **GENERAL ANNOUCEMENTS**

**Ushers.** We are always looking for more Ushers – no experience necessary! Please see Dave or Bev Jurkiewicz, or Debbie Wooley, for more information!

**Joys and Concerns.** If you wish to have a joy or concern announced during worship, please forward to them to Aren at [office@mccucc.com](mailto:office@mccucc.com) or call the church office at (203) 248-7408.

**Pastoral Support.** If you require pastoral support or guidance, please contact the office and our office administrator will put you in contact with someone who can help.

**Committee Openings.** Looking to get involved? There are several Committee Openings for Deacons (2 openings), Faith Formation (3 openings), and Music (3 openings)! If you would like to try out a committee (attend a meeting with no obligations), please contact the office and Aren will put you in touch with the committee chair!

**Coffee Hour.** Coffee Hour volunteers are needed. If you would like to sign up for a Sunday, please contact the office directly or use the signup sheet now located at the entrance of the Parish House.

**Altar Flowers.** Altar flowers are needed. If you would like to sign up for a Sunday, please contact the office directly or use the signup sheet now located at the entrance of the Parish House.

**Parish Hall Rentals.** If you or anyone you know would be interested in renting out our parish hall to host a meeting, service, or a small private event, please feel free to visit our website for scheduling, rates, and conditions.

**Food Bank.** Donations for the Food Bank are always needed if you are able to contribute. Non-perishable items such as canned beef stew, hearty soups, canned fish, peanut butter, mac and cheese packages, and oatmeal would be greatly appreciated.



## The Altar Guild

Orders for **Memorial Poinsettia Plants, 2022**

**When:** Coffee Hours, Sunday, November 27<sup>th</sup> and December 4<sup>th</sup>.

**or call Karen Amato (272-0174) by Wednesday, December 7<sup>th</sup>.**

**Choice of: Red, White, or Marbled**

**Cost: \$8.00 each**

Plants may be taken after worship on **Christmas Eve, Saturday, Dec. 24<sup>th</sup>.**

Please fill out the form below and return to Karen Amato or the church office.

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### ***POINSETTIA ORDER FORM***

Ordered By \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

Or, (other dedication) \_\_\_\_\_

Total number \_\_\_\_\_ Red \_\_\_\_\_ White \_\_\_\_\_ Marbled \_\_\_\_\_

Total Cost \_\_\_\_\_

Check one: Will take after worship \_\_\_\_\_ Will Leave at Church \_\_\_\_\_



**P.L.A.C.E. Art Studio**  
Imagine. Create. Explore.

## Kids Paint Party

SATURDAY 3:00 pm  
DEC to  
10 5:00 pm

**\$25**

Includes Paint Party & Refreshments!

### LOCATION

3284 Whitney Avenue, Hamden  
Parish Hall at Mt Carmel Congregational Church



11 x 14 Canvas

For Ages 7 & Up. Adults welcome.  
All abilities welcome with supports.



**SIGN UP  
HERE** →

HOST: PLACE ART STUDIO  
info@placechildrensmuseum.org  
203.288.8600

<https://forms.gle/8ZUkFBUpUV6qSL55A>



PLACE TB

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# Hamden Kids *Holiday* Toy Drive



**HAMDEN MART PARKING LOT**  
(USE SKIFF STREET ENTRANCE)

**2300 Dixwell Ave, Hamden CT 06514**

Saturday

December 3<sup>rd</sup>, December 10<sup>th</sup>,  
December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022  
from 10:00am-2:00pm



***DROP AND GO  
STAY IN YOUR VEHICLE,  
STAY IN LINE,  
OPEN YOUR TRUNK,  
WE WILL GRAB.***

Donate toys ages infant - sixth grade or make a donation and we will do the shopping for you.



We service over 500 children during the holiday. Gift Suggestions:  
dolls, trucks, legos, movie passes, gift cards, soccer balls, basketballs,  
footballs, craft kits, remote control cars.

Hamden Kids Holiday Toy Drive is collaboration of  
Town Departments including  
Hamden Community Services, Hamden Police & Hamden fire department, CERT,

More info call AnneMarie Community Services 203-562-5129 Ext 1110



# Unscramble the Scrambles

## Mary's "Magnificat"

Before Jesus was born, an angel came to a young woman named Mary, and said, "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest:...and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:30-33, KJV). Then Mary told her cousin, Elizabeth, how happy she was. Her song is called the "Magnificat."

Unscramble the underlined words below to see what Mary said. You may want to look up the verses in Luke 1:46-55 (KJV).

**Verse 46** And Mary said, My soul doth Y A I M F N G \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord,

**Verse 47** And my T I S R P I \_\_\_\_\_ hath rejoiced in God  
my R A I S V U O \_\_\_\_\_.

**Verse 48** For he hath regarded the low T S A E E T \_\_\_\_\_ of his handmaiden:  
for, E H B L O D \_\_\_\_\_, from henceforth all generations  
shall call me D E S B E L S \_\_\_\_\_.

**Verse 49** For he that is T I M H Y G \_\_\_\_\_ hath done to me  
T R A E G \_\_\_\_\_ things; and holy is his name.

**Verse 50** And his C M R Y E \_\_\_\_\_ is on them that E R F A \_\_\_\_\_  
him from generation to generation.

**Verse 51** He hath shewed R N T E H S T G \_\_\_\_\_ with his arm;  
he hath scattered the R U P O D \_\_\_\_\_ in the imagination of  
their S E R H A T \_\_\_\_\_.

**Verse 52** He hath put O N W D \_\_\_\_\_ the mighty from their  
T E S S A \_\_\_\_\_, and exalted them of low degree.

**Verse 53** He hath filled the G N H R U Y \_\_\_\_\_ with good things; and the rich  
he hath sent Y T E P M \_\_\_\_\_ away.

**Verse 54** He hath holpen his servant S A I E R L \_\_\_\_\_, in remembrance  
of his C M R E Y \_\_\_\_\_;

**Verse 55** As he spake to our S E T F H A R \_\_\_\_\_, to Abraham,  
and to his D E S E \_\_\_\_\_ for ever.



### 13. Jesus was Conceived to Virgin Mary

#### Luke 1:26-38 KJV

... the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth.

To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.

And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.

And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.

And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.

For with God nothing shall be impossible.

And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

H B L E S S E D I S N C E O D  
H N L E S U O H Y E O N S E B  
H T E R A Z A N R C R O I S W E  
G O R E I G N R C R X U H O D  
S T G O T E A E H T O I N D E  
H S O I F B I T H P G N E A T  
A N N Y V Y C S H G L C H R  
L V O T E W E L B B J L S A  
L N I S U O C Y T U O N E R P  
R R K R M Z M B O B N R G E E  
H E F E G R M R P P O L N V D  
A N N N Y I T I M S R C A O B  
I N K R Z T N N W T A Q A M G  
L A A C C P T G N F G W O J H  
K M M G A B R I E L N W Y B L

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### 13. Jesus was Conceived to Virgin Mary

ANGEL	GABRIEL	REIGN
BARREN	GIVE	SAW
BLESSED	HAIL	SHALL
BORN	HIGHLY	SIXTH
BRING	HOUSE	SON
CONCEIVE	JACOB	THRONE
COUSIN	MANNER	TROUBLED
DEPARTED	MARY	VIRGIN
ESPOUSED	NAZARETH	WOMEN
FORTH	OVERSHADOW	WOMB

## 14. Joseph the Carpenter Took Mary to Be His Wife

### Matthew 1:18-24 NIV

This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Inmanuel"—which means, "God with us."

When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

J S O S D S U O E T H G I R E  
C P A N H W C D A J L I T N U  
H S I V A G I A O O D M D L Y  
R M Y M E S D S M A I M N E L  
I L T G N E F E A A G S T  
S Q O R U P B R F K R N T O E  
T O A O H N O I M W F U A P I  
K C F G O F W D H W A E K X U  
E L F I E W O K E U R L E E Q  
S P N B K C X M I S H O M E  
N U E C R O V I D A R B M J V  
A B I R T H M X L F E R A Y R  
E P M F M N A M Q B R R A N G  
M R V N M O T H E R U K D M D  
N K H M D E G D E L P P J Q R

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### 14. Joseph the Carpenter Took Mary to Be His Wife

AFRAID	HOME	PUBLIC
BEFORE	HUSBAND	QUIETLY
BIRTH	IMMANUEL	RIGHTEOUS
CAME	JOSEPH	SAVE
CHRIST	MAN	TAKE
DISGRACE	MARRIED	TOOK
DIVORCE	MEANS	UNION
DREAM	MIND	UNTIL
EXPOSE	MOTHER	WIFE
FOUND	PLEDGED	WOKE



**Mount Carmel Congregational Church**  
3284 Whitney Avenue, Hamden, CT 06518  
Church Website: [www.mccucc.com](http://www.mccucc.com)  
203-248-7408

Office Admin: Mr. Aren Alberico  
[office@mccucc.com](mailto:office@mccucc.com)  
Music Director: Mrs. Lynda Pedersen  
[lyndapedersen@att.net](mailto:lyndapedersen@att.net)  
Faith Formation: Mrs. Debbie Wooley  
[ce@mccucc.com](mailto:ce@mccucc.com)  
Treasurer: Mrs. Ellen Amato  
[treasurer@mccucc.com](mailto:treasurer@mccucc.com)  
Facebook: @mountcarmelcongregationalchurch  
Instagram: mountcarmelchurch1

**Officers:**

President: Tom Duffy  
[thomasduffy67@gmail.com](mailto:thomasduffy67@gmail.com)  
Clerk: Beverly Jurkiewicz  
[bevjur@comcast.net](mailto:bevjur@comcast.net)  
Board of Deacons: Bev Jurkiewicz, Chair  
Board of Trustees: Anna Anderson, Chair  
[aanderson545@gmail.com](mailto:aanderson545@gmail.com)