Reverend W. Alan Froggatt, Minister
Karli Gilbertson, Music Director and Organist
Post Office Box 383, Chester, Connecticut 06412 860-526-2697
E-mail: unitedchester@sbcglobal.net web site: www.uccchester.org

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHESTER

An Open & Affirming Congregation of
The United Church of Christ
January 5, 2025 10:00 a.m.
Second Sunday of Christmastide

PREPARATION FOR THE WORD

WELCOME		Jennifer Gill, Deacon
PRELUDE	*While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks*	G.F. Handel
INTROIT	*Spirit of the Living God*	D. Iverson

CALL TO WORSHIP

A blank sheet of paper, ready for a new story to be written;
The cry of a newborn babe, for whom a lifetime of wonder awaits;
A fresh snowfall, etching new designs on a landscape that were always and already there;
A fleeting idea written on a cocktail napkin, which transforms a world;
The decision made in a moment of whimsy that turns into a lifetime commitment;
God who makes all things new, inscribe your grace, wisdom and mercy on our spirits at the threshold of this new year. Amen.

*HYMN *Great God, We Sing That Mighty Hand* 523

Great God, we sing that mighty hand by which supported still we stand; the opening year your mercy shows; my mercy crown it till it close.

By day, by night, at home, abroad, still are we guarded by our God: by God's incessant bounty fed and by unerring counsel led.

With grateful hearts the past we own; the future, all to us unknown, we to your guardian care commit, and, peaceful, at your feet shall sit.

In scenes exalted or depressed, you are our joy, our promised rest; your goodness all our hopes shall raise, adored through all our changing days.

INVOCATION

Lord, at the start of this New Year, we look toward you, our hope, our peace, and our comfort. As we enter into the unknown of the coming year, we ask for your guidance and wisdom. Illumine our path with your light so that we may walk in your ways and make choices that align with your will. Help us to seek first your kingdom and trust that all other things will be added unto us. In the name of Jesus our Savior, Amen.

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

APOCRYPHA LESSON — Wisdom of Solomon 10.15-21

A holy people and blameless race, wisdom delivered from a nation of oppressors. She entered the soul of a servant of the Lord, and withstood dread kings with wonders and signs. She gave to holy people the reward of their labors; she guided them along a marvelous way, and became a shelter to them by day, and a starry flame through the night. She brought them over the Red Sea, and led them through deep waters; but she drowned their enemies, and cast them up from the depths of the sea. Therefore the righteous plundered the ungodly; they sang hymns, O Lord, to your holy name, and praised with one accord your defending hand; for wisdom opened the mouths of those who were mute, and made the tongues of infants speak clearly.

ANTHEM — *Beautiful Star of Bethlehem* — Chanticleer

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON — Luke 2.25-35 — (p 936)

REMEMBRANCE TREE — Rev. W. Alan Froggatt

HYMN — *God, Bid Your Servant Go In Peace* — 166

God, bid your servant go in peace, your word is now fulfilled. These eyes have seen salvation's dawn, this child so long foretold.

This is the Savior of the world, the Gentiles' promised light, God's glory dwelling in our midst, the joy of Israel.

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

OFFERTORY — *Here, O My Lord* — D. Paxton

*DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow / Praise God all creatures here below
Praise God for all that love has done / Creator, Christ and Spirit, One. Amen

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER & LORD'S PRAYER *("trespasses")*

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP

POEM from *Elegy in Joy* Muriel Rukeyser (1913-1980)

*HYMN *For All the Saints* 486

For all the saints who from their labors rest, who thee by faith before the world confessed, thy name, O Jesus, be forever blest, Alleluia! Alleluia!

Thou wast their rock, their fortress, and their might: thou, Lord, their captain in the well fought fight; thou, in the darkness drear, their one true light. Alleluia! Alleluia!

O may thy soldiers, faithful, true and bold, fight as the saints who nobly fought of old, and win with them the victor's crown of gold. Alleluia! Alleluia!

O blest communion, fellowship divine! We feebly struggle, they in glory shine; yet all are one in thee, for all are thine. Alleluia! Alleluia!

And when the strife is fierce, the warfare long, steals on the ear the distant triumph song, and hearts are brave again, and arms are strong. Alleluia! Alleluia!

*BLESSING & BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE *May the Road Rise to Meet You* A. Lovelace

(* all who are able may stand)

LOOKING AHEAD

January 5	**10:00 am** 5:00 pm	**Worship** Soup Kitchen	January 9	8:30 am 5:30 pm 6:30 pm **7:00 pm**	Yoga Scouts Scouts **Choir Rehearsal**
January 6	5:30 pm	Irish Dance	January 10	**8:15 am**	**Coffice Hours – The Villager**
January 7	8:30 am 6:30 pm	Yoga Scouts	January 12	**10:00 am** **11:00 am** **11:00 am** 5:00 pm	**Worship** **Deacons' Mtg** **Trustees' Mtg** Soup Kitchen
January 8	6:30 pm	Scouts			

NOTES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome! No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here at the United Church of Chester, an Open and Affirming Church and a member of the United Church of Christ. **The United Church of Chester is centered in Christ's love, embracing, nurturing, serving all, and committed to justice and peace**.

This deacon for the month of January is **Jennifer Gill.** The greeter this morning is **Barb Tomasi.**

The **Deacons** will be meeting on **Tuesday, January 7th at 10 am** in the sanctuary to take down all the Christmas decorations and put them in the attic. We could really use the help of two men to bring these to the attic for us. We thank you in advance for helping us out.

Council Meeting – January 19th
There will be a Council Meeting, Sunday, January 19th following the worship service.

2025 Offering Envelopes are available in the narthex. Please see **Diane Lindsay** if you need a supply of envelopes.

ALAN'S OFFICE HOURS: Wednesday-Friday 8:30 am-12:30 pm, other times by appointment

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday-Friday 9am-1pm.