



The _____
First Congregational Church
of Woodstock _____

*Declaring, "Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today,
and forever." Hebrews 13:8*

December 29th, 2024

The Congregation may be seated after the Benediction for silent prayer.

Postlude

~~ Organist: Anne Hablitzel ~~

~~ Please ensure cell phones are off ~~

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**Advent and Christmas Devotional Booklet**

This is our final week of using the Advent and Christmas booklet for daily devotions rather than the weekly Taking Gathered Worship home. Be sure to pick up your copy from the back table if you don't already have one!

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FCCW on Facebook

Are you following FCCW on Facebook? If you are, please be sure to like and share our posts! If not, you can find us at facebook.com/fccwoodstock and follow today!

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**Nursery Volunteers Needed**

Can you give one Sunday to help minister to the youngest members of our church family? If you are willing to help one Sunday or more, you can find the sign-up sheet with the winter/spring schedule in the Billings Room, or contact Kristen at [fccwinfo@gmail.com](mailto:fccwinfo@gmail.com).

Nursery Volunteer Schedule for January/February:

- |                           |                           |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1/5 _____ & _____         | 2/2 _____ & _____         |
| 1/12 _____ & _____        | 2/9 _____ & _____         |
| 1/19 _____ & _____        | 2/16 Keri Bristow & _____ |
| 1/26 Keri Bristow & _____ | 2/23 Keri Bristow & _____ |

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## Weekly Gathering Opportunities

**Tuesdays, 7:00 am** — FCCW Breakfast Club (Middle School & High School Bible Study)—meet at Maplefields to grab breakfast, then on to the church for study, discussion, and prayer. Contact Michael Byrne at [michael@clickthruvt.com](mailto:michael@clickthruvt.com). *(will not meet 12/24 & 12/31)*

**Tuesdays, 10:00 am** —Ladies' Bible Study meets in person at FCCW and via ZOOM, please contact Bonnie Atwood at (802) 457-4120 or email [bonhope2@gmail.com](mailto:bonhope2@gmail.com). *(will not meet 12/24 & 12/31)*

**Tuesdays, 6:00 pm** — Prayer Meeting, in person in the library and via ZOOM *(will not meet 12/24 & 12/31)*

**Wednesdays, 6:15 am** — Men's Bible Study, in person in the library and via ZOOM, please contact Dick Atwood at (802) 457-4120 or email [rbatwood1@gmail.com](mailto:rbatwood1@gmail.com). *(will not meet 12/25 & 1/1)*

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Taking Gathered Worship Home

God not only blesses. He curses also. He does so in perfect justice, not maliciously or capriciously as we are prone to do. This passage in Mark is difficult for us to hear, but necessary. We need to heed the warning of God. Let us not be like the fig tree or Herod's temple or the hypocrite—full of leaves but no fruit for our Lord. Let us testify truthfully to the glory of our King!

Please use the Advent & Christmas Booklet for daily devotions this week.

Second Chronicles 29:16-19

¹⁶ The **priests** went into the inner part of the house of the Lord to *cleanse* it, and they brought out all the uncleanness that they found in the temple of the Lord into the court of the house of the Lord. And the Levites took it and carried it out to the brook Kidron. ¹⁷ They began to consecrate on the first day of the first month, and on the eighth day of the month they came to the vestibule of the Lord. Then for eight days they consecrated the house of the Lord, and on the sixteenth day of the first month they finished. ¹⁸ Then they went in to Hezekiah the king and said, “We have cleansed all the house of the Lord, the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils, and the table for the showbread and all its utensils. ¹⁹ All the utensils that King Ahaz discarded in his reign when he was faithless, we have made ready and consecrated, and behold, they are before the altar of the Lord.”

First Peter 2:1-12

So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. ² Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— ³ if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

⁴ As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, ⁵ you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶ For it stands in Scripture:

“Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”

⁷ So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe,

“The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,”

⁸ and “A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense.”

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

¹¹ Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. ¹² Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

Meditate on Galatians 5:22-24

“But *the fruit of the Spirit* is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.”