

The Congregational Church, United Church of Christ  
Amherst, New Hampshire



*“The nitrogen in our DNA, the calcium in our teeth,  
the iron in our blood, the carbon in our apple pies were made  
in the interiors of collapsing stars. We are made of star stuff.”*

—Carl Sagan

# THE ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

The Congregational Church, United Church of Christ  
Amherst, New Hampshire

January 3, 2021

Epiphany Sunday

10:00 a.m.

PRELUDE

*The Golden Carol*

Robert J. Powell

GREETING AND NOTICES OF PARISH LIFE

CALL TO WORSHIP and PRAYER OF INVOCATION and THE LORD'S PRAYER

One: The magi came from many places, following a star.

**Many: We come from many places to worship, and the star sheds light on our lives.**

One: The magi brought gifts to offer the Christ Child.

**Many: We too bring gifts – our hopes, our dreams, ourselves.**

One: Shepherds and magi – the meek and the mighty – all are welcome in Bethlehem.

**Many: We too come to Bethlehem and then return home rejoicing!**

Let us pray:

God of all people and places, like the magi we journey into the presence of Jesus the Christ. Here we offer our gifts. Before the Christ child we lay the realities of our lives, good and bad. We offer joy and love and laughter, that they might be made holy; we relinquish our bitterness and hatred and worry, that we might be made whole once more, through the living spirit of Christ.

We pray in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

SONG OF PRAISE

*Gloria*

Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

CHILDREN'S TIME

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of God be with you. AND ALSO WITH YOU.

HYMN

*We Three Kings of Orient Are*

verses 1 and 5

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON

Matthew 2:1-12

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'" Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage."

When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

SERMON

"Into the Light"

ANTHEM

*Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light*

Sara Phelps, soprano

Johann Schop/  
arr. J. S. Bach

JOYS AND CONCERNS and PASTORAL PRAYER

INVITATION TO SHARE OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (in unison)

Generous God, we bring our gifts as an act of awe and wonder, knowing that you multiply every effort. We share the joy of the magi, for we too have seen the star and know the joy of giving. We praise you with our gifts and with our lives, that the great riches of Christ might be opened for all to experience. Amen.

THE SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

COMMUNION PRAYER

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

BREAKING OF THE BREAD, POURING OF THE CUP

CONSECRATING PRAYER

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND THE CUP

COMMUNION PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (in unison)

We give thanks, loving God, for the bond of this ritual and communal meal that links us to all who have called upon your name. May your wisdom grow within us. May your word inspire us. May the nourishment of this bread and cup strengthen us for the journey, as you send us out into the world as people of courage, compassion, and commitment. Amen.

COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION

THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD

POSTLUDE

*How Brightly Shines the Morning Star—  
BuxWV 223, verse 4*

Dietrich Buxtehude

*Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service  
obtained from One License with license #A-731944.*

*Portions of today's liturgy are adapted from Touch Holiness  
and from Flames of the Spirit, by Ruth C. Duck.*



**THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AMHERST**  
A Welcoming, Open and Affirming Congregation  
of the United Church of Christ



**“No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey,  
you are welcome here.”**

*We, the members of the Congregational Church of Amherst, New Hampshire, United Church of Christ, believe God’s Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ call us to love all our neighbors as we would want to be loved. We are called to be as one body, seeking to walk together in the full life and ministry of our church.*

*We welcome each individual as a child of God. As covenant members of Christ’s church, we celebrate God’s love for people of all races and ethnic backgrounds, all mental and physical abilities, all socioeconomic backgrounds, all sexual orientations, all gender identities and gender expressions, and all of the other diverse attributes woven into the fabric of humankind.*

*With God’s grace, we invite all to share in the life and leadership, ministry and fellowship, worship and sacraments, responsibilities and blessings of our church.*

We are pleased that you have chosen to worship with us. Our membership is open to all those who choose to walk with us in our witness. Please speak with any of our deacons or pastors should you have any questions regarding our church or our membership.

Here’s how to reach us: by telephone 673-3231, or by email [info@ccamherst.org](mailto:info@ccamherst.org). If we are unavailable by phone, please feel free to leave a message and we will get back to you as soon as we can. Visit our church’s website at [www.ccamherst.org](http://www.ccamherst.org), and follow us on Facebook at Facebook.com/ccamherst.

**Current Reopening Information:** Are you wondering where things stand? Through the members section on our website, we have a page dedicated to communicating with our church family on both current policies and procedures for use of the building during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the progress of our ad hoc Reopening Team. Documents will be posted as they are made available. If you have any questions or concerns about any of this information, please reach out to any member of the team: Pastor Maureen Frescott, Jessica Greer, Pastor Kate Kennedy, Keith Lammers, Susan Manchester, Kathy Skoglund, Paul Spiess, Kate Thompson, Doug Topliffe, Sue Werst, Tom Werst.

***Grounded in God’s Love—Serving Neighbors Near and Far—Welcoming to All***

## PARTICIPATING IN TODAY'S SERVICE

Members and Friends of The Congregational Church

Rev. Maureen R. Frescott

Sara L. Phelps

Michael Havay

Stephanie Dumoski

Ministers to the World

Senior Pastor

Director of Music

Organist/Accompanist

Liturgist

**THE PRELUDE FOR TODAY** is a setting of the old English carol "The Golden Carol." In 1504 in Bristol, England a member of Parliament, John Foster, built the Chapel of the Three Kings of Cologne. Around this same time The Golden Carol was composed. The Kings (or Magi, or Wise Men) are designated as "The Three Kings of Cologne" because it is said bones of the Kings are contained in a shrine at Cologne Cathedral. The relics originated in Constantinople, and were moved to a church in Milan in 314, then to Cologne in 1164. King Otto IV of Germany gave three gold crowns to the Cathedral in 1199 which are purported to be the crowns of the Three Kings. To this day the three gold crowns are part of the coat of arms of the city of Cologne.

Verse 1 of "The Golden Carol"

We saw a light shine out afar,  
 On Christmas in the morning,  
 And straight we knew it was Christ's star,  
 Bright beaming in the morning.  
 Then did we fall on bended knee,  
 On Christmas in the morning,  
 And praised the Lord, who'd let us see  
 His glory at its dawning.

**SHARE FOOD PANTRY** requests for January include canned ham, canned meats, side dishes (seasoned pasta mix, Hamburger Helper, etc.), ravioli and Beef-a-Roni. Donations should be brought directly to the SHARE Center in Milford; if you are unsure where, please call their office at 673-9898. Many thanks for your continuing support!

### Financial Summary

(as of November 30, 2020)

	YTD <u>Actual</u>	YTD <u>Budget</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Income	\$222,622	\$197,413	\$ 25,209
Expenses	\$181,139	\$196,563	\$( 15,424)
Net Income	\$ 41,483	\$ 850	\$ 40,633

*Numbers have been rounded to the nearest whole dollar; as such, some columns may not appear to total correctly.*

*We hope you are finding this information helpful. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to anyone on the Finance Team: Keith Lammers, Paul Spiess, Doug Topliffe, Todd Whitney and Tim Wiegand (Treasurer).*

**WEDNESDAY MORNING ADULT ED** continues the series *A New Look at the Old Testament*. Is the Old Testament still relevant today? Who wrote it and why? We'll take a NEW look at the OLD Testament through this video lecture series produced by the Great Courses.

We gather on Zoom to watch the lectures together and have a group discussion afterward facilitated by Pastor Maureen. All are welcome! **Our next session is January 6.** Please RSVP to [pastormaureen@ccamherst.org](mailto:pastormaureen@ccamherst.org) to receive the Zoom link, or access the link on our church website in the Members Section under "Wednesday Adult Ed."

**CHURCH SCHOOL:** Today's lesson is *The Wise Men* (Matthew 1:23). Traveling from the East, hearing of Jesus' birth, they wanted to honor the king and present gifts. Today, when so many of our lives have been impacted by circumstances out of our control, we must honor God, using the Fruits of the Spirit, to share God's love.

**Brown Bag Lessons** for the winter term, January and February, one bag per month, will be created. Along with the bag, a Spark Story Bible will be delivered.

**Happy New Year!** Best wishes for good health and great joy!

## Our Church Calendar

January 3—9, 2021

Most events are taking place virtually. Links are sent out directly by email, and a list of recurring meetings with their links can be found in the member section of our website.

Today	10:00 a.m.	Worship
	11:00 a.m.	Fellowship
	12:00 p.m.	Small Group Ministry
	6:00 p.m.	Senior High Youth Group
Monday	10:00 a.m.	Woman's Association
Tuesday	9:00 a.m.	Men's Fellowship
	1:30 p.m.	Small Group Ministry
	6:00 p.m.	Church Council
Wednesday	10:00 a.m.	<i>A New Look at the Old Testament</i>
Thursday	2:30 p.m.	Prayerful Playgroup

### *The Lectionary texts for the next two weeks are:*

January 6:  
Epiphany  
Isaiah 60:1-6  
Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14  
Ephesians 3:1-12  
Matthew 2:1-12

January 10:  
The Baptism of Christ  
Genesis 1:1-5  
Psalm 29  
Acts 19:1-7  
Mark 1:4-11

January 17: 1 Samuel 3:1-10, (11-20)  
Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18  
1 Corinthians 6:12-20  
John 1:43-51



*Sunday, January 3, 2021*