

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 2, 2022

Epiphany Sunday

10:00 a.m.

## GATHERING CHIMES

*Let us be gathered in silence so that we may prepare to worship.*

## GREETING AND NOTICES OF PARISH LIFE

## PRELUDE

*I Saw Three Ships*

David Clark Isele

## \*CALL TO WORSHIP

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.**

One: May the light of the Christ Child shine through us, in this hour and always.

**Many: Come, let us carry the presence of God!**

## PRAYER OF INVOCATION and THE LORD'S PRAYER (unison)

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.

**\*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE**

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

**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**

"Star Gifts"

**ANTHEM**

*What Star is This, with Beams So Bright*

Sara Phelps, soloist

Michael Havay, piano

**JOYS AND CONCERNS and PASTORAL PRAYER**

*If you have a prayer to share, fill out a prayer card in your pew and place it in the "Joys and Concerns" plate at the back of the sanctuary. Ushers will bring the cards forward to the pastor during the Anthem.*

**ORGAN PRAYER RESPONSE**

**SHARING OUR OFFERINGS and RECEIVING OUR STAR GIFTS**

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION (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

*We welcome all people to join in receiving this sacrament. Children may participate at the discretion of their parents.*

### COMMUNION PRAYER

### WORDS OF INSTITUTION

### BREAKING OF THE BREAD, POURING OF THE CUP

### CONSECRATING PRAYER

### SHARING OF THE BREAD AND THE CUP

*The bread will be available at the door at the beginning of the service, and the juice will be served in the pews during Communion. The bread is gluten, dairy, and egg free. We will be invited to eat the bread and drink the juice together. After receiving communion, please return the empty wrappers and communion cups to the holders on the back of the pew.*

### COMMUNION PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (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

*Yuletide Joyeux*

Craig A. Penfield

(\*Indicates that those who are able may stand.)

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

# THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AMHERST, NH, UCC



**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.

## Worship Notes:

- Church school is on break this week and will resume Sunday, January 9.
- Our church nursery is open, but not currently staffed, and is available when parents with young children feel the need for a quiet, safe space to go to during worship. A monitor is available to watch and listen to the service.
- Joys and Concerns may be written on the cards found on the small table as you entered the sanctuary. You are also welcome to submit your prayer request through our website in advance of the worship service.
- Offering plates can be found at the front and the rear of the sanctuary.
- Please join us in the community room for a time of fellowship after the worship service. Coffee and beverages are offered, and masks are required when not consuming beverages.
- In the event of an emergency, please remain seated until instructions have been given.

The church office is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10:00 to 1:00 p.m., and available Monday through Friday by telephone 673-3231 and by email [info@ccamherst.org](mailto:info@ccamherst.org). 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.com/ccamherst and Instagram.com/ccamherstnh.

***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

Roger Hooper

Sue Spiess

Andrea Cyr

Ministers to the World

Senior Pastor

Director of Music

Organist/Accompanist

Deacon in Charge

Liturgist

Videographer

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Rev. Katherine R. Kennedy

Wendy Valeri

Gretchen Davis

Associate Pastor

Bell Choir Director

Interim Children's Coordinator

### **DONATED ALTAR FLOWERS WELCOME:**

Flowers can be given to remember a loved one or to celebrate a special occasion. The donor arranges with a local florist to have their chosen flowers delivered, or can create their own arrangement and deliver it on Saturday. After the service they may take the flowers home or donate them to someone in need of some cheer. There are many openings in the coming months. Contact Andrea in the church office to schedule a Sunday.

### **CHURCH DIRECTORY UPDATES:**

It is important to us to have accurate contact information for you. Please take a moment to check your information in the church directory, especially phone numbers. Many folks use only their cell phones now, but haven't updated that in our directory. You can view your directory information in the member section of our website, and if an update is needed, you can use the Contact Update form on that page.

**VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED** on Sunday mornings to help run the live-stream camera and laptop during worship. It's easy and we are hoping to train a few more folks so the rotation is easy on everyone. Contact Doug Topliffe if you'd like to learn.

### **Financial Summary**

(as of November 30, 2021)

	YTD <u>Actual</u>	YTD <u>Budget</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Income	\$205,225	\$217,934	\$(12,709)
Expenses	\$204,241	\$200,017	\$ 4,224
Net Income	\$ 984	\$ 17,917	\$(16,933)

*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).*

**THE CHURCH SCHOOL** is currently looking for help to build a new and improved living Nativity structure. Our current manger scene has not weathered our New England winters very well and is in disrepair. As this is a much loved Christmas tradition in our church we would very much like to reconstruct it with new materials for the 2022 Christmas season. If this is a project you may be interested in helping, please contact Gretchen Davis at [churchschool@ccamherst.org](mailto:churchschool@ccamherst.org) for more details.

**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!

**CALLING ALL PARENTS of young children:** The CCA Parents Group is reconvening in 2022! Parents Group is a playgroup that meets in-person, once a month. It's a place for kids to play and parents to explore their spiritual lives and experiences. Through readings and discussion, young parents at CCA get to know each through fellowship and faith formation.

Parents group is open to parents of all genders, whether they attend this church, any church, or none at all! This group welcomes all who are seeking authentic connection, spiritual conversation, and deeper friendship with people on a similar part of life's path.

If you are interested in joining the parents group, reach out to Pastor Kate at [pastorkate@ccamherst.org](mailto:pastorkate@ccamherst.org).

## Our Church Calendar

January 2—8, 2022

Some 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—Sanctuary
	11:00 a.m.	Fellowship—Community Room
	11:30 a.m.	Small Group Ministry
Tuesday	1:30 p.m.	Small Group Ministry
	5:00 p.m.	Church Council
Thursday	6:00 p.m.	Bell Choir—Sanctuary
	7:30 p.m.	Chancel Choir—Sanctuary

*Sunday, January 2, 2022*