

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



*"No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another,
God lives in us and God's love is made complete in us."*

—1 John 4:12

THE ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

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

December 19, 2021

Fourth Sunday of Advent

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

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Louis H. Redner/
Marianne Kim

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

The Endres Family

One: We light candles for the four weeks leading to Christmas in anticipation of the coming of the light of Christ.

Many: The first candle reminds us that we wait in Hope for that light.

One: The second candle reminds us of our dreams for Peace.

Many: The third candle reminds us of our longing for Joy.

One: Today we light the fourth candle, the candle of Love.

Many: This candle reminds us of the love that God has for us.

One: This candle reminds us of the strength and courage we find in that love.

Many: This candle reminds us that God calls us to love our neighbor as we love ourselves.

One: This candle reminds us that to find the hope, peace, and joy that we seek, everything we do and say must be born out of love.

All: We light this candle for Love.

(All four Advent candles are lit)

Please join us as we pray the words that Jesus taught us in The Lord's Prayer:

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.

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT VIDEO

Our Church School Children

*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

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

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON

Micah 5:2-5a

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; and he shall be the one of peace. If the Assyrians come into our land and tread upon our soil, we will raise against them seven shepherds and eight installed as rulers.

SERMON

“The Hopes and Fears of All the Years”

ANTHEM

Oh, Come, Oh, Come Emmanuel
O Come, All Ye Faithful
Sue Werst, flute
Michael Havay, piano

Anne Krentz Orga
John F. Wade/
arr. Mary Mulfinger Orozco

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

INVITATION TO OUR OFFERING

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)

Our best we give to you, loving God, for you have given your best to us in the mystery of the incarnation. Send your Word to the world in this season through our caring service. May we share it with one another in ways that helps us all to grow. We are your servants. These gifts we dedicate are already yours. Amen.

COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION

THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD

POSTLUDE

The Sussex Carol

trad. English/Robert Lau

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

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 available for children Pre-K through grade 7.
- 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. An emergency plan is in place for the children in the church school.

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. 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, 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

Rev. Katherine R. Kennedy

Michael Havay

Russ Demarest

Doug Topliffe

Ministers to the World

Senior Pastor

Associate Pastor

Organist/Accompanist

Deacon in Charge

Videographer

Sara L. Phelps

Wendy Valeri

Gretchen Davis

Director of Music

Bell Choir Director

Interim Children's Coordinator

THE WREATHS ON THE FRONT of our church have been provided by the Jackson Fund, established many years ago by Robert Jackson to honor his mother's tradition of providing Christmas wreaths for our church. Elizabeth Darling Jackson began this family's tradition of providing the wreaths on the advice of her mother, Louella Darling.

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 for more details.

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. Donations towards the cost of this new technology continue to be gratefully accepted.

SHARE FOOD PANTRY requests for December include toothbrushes and toothpaste, deodorants, shampoo and conditioner, bar soap, feminine hygiene products, diapers and wipes. 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!

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.

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



Christmas Eve Worship

is IN-PERSON and ONLINE this year!

**Join us for our
Traditional Candlelight Service
at 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.
on Christmas Eve**

A service of lessons and carols featuring music from our Organist, Michael Havay, our Director of Music, Sara Phelps, and Wendy Valeri and our full Bell Choir, along with readings from our youth, and a special showing of our recorded Christmas pageant put on by our church school children.

We'll hear a Christmas Message from Pastor Maureen and Pastor Kate, and we'll end by SINGING "Silent Night" (inside) and "Joy to the World" (outside) by candlelight.

Families are welcome to attend either service. Masks are required inside. In the event we reach capacity for our in-person services, an overflow space will be set up in our community room where the livestream will be shown.

The service will be livestreamed on Facebook at 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. and will be available on our website at 8:00 p.m.

All are welcome as we worship and celebrate the birth of Jesus together!

The Lectionary texts for the next two weeks are:



December 26: Luke 2:41-52

January 2: Matthew 2:1-12

The Christmas Fund for Veterans of the Cross

The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund is a unique special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that affords us an opportunity to recognize and honor those who serve our beloved church. One of the special aspects of the Christmas Fund is that the funds provide direct financial assistance to individual UCC clergy and lay employees. Here are some examples from the 2020 drive:

- ◆ **\$252,000 in Christmas Thank You Checks** to 504 retired UCC clergy/lay employees. Retirees with limited financial resources receive a gift at Christmas time as a way of saying “thank you” for years of service to the United Church of Christ.
- ◆ **\$1,180,187 in Pension Supplementation** to 276 lower-income retired UCC clergy/lay employees. Retirees with limited financial resources receive monthly payments to bring their household income up to a minimum level so that they can afford basic needs such as food, utilities or medical expenses.
- ◆ **\$274,008 in Health Benefits Supplementation** to 89 lower-income retired UCC clergy/lay employees. Retirees with limited financial resources receive assistance to pay their UCC Medicare Supplement Plan premiums.
- ◆ **\$214,649 in Emergency Grants** to 96 active/retired UCC clergy/lay employees. Sometimes those who serve the Church face unforeseen circumstances that create financial need. Our help and emergency funds are available to assist in covering those costs.

Your gifts are needed more than ever to help the growing number of retirees whose low-income annuities make it difficult to meet increasing living costs. This is your opportunity to participate in God's promise of renewal by enabling this ministry of compassion and care.

Please consider contributing to this special fund:

- Donate using the special Christmas Fund pew envelopes Dec 1 – 24.
- Donate online at any time using our online [Donate](#) page. Choose ‘Other Donations’ and make sure to put ‘Christmas Fund Appeal’ in the text line.
- You can send in a check to the church, 11 Church St., Amherst, NH 03031 and put ‘Christmas Fund’ in the memo line.

For more information visit [UCC Pension Board Info Page](#)

Sunday, December 19, 2021

Church School students participating in this year's pageant:

Readers

Abby Endres
Oliver Normandin
Stella Theriault

Angel Gabriel

Adelia Curtis

Mary

Jillian Burkley

Joseph

Zakary Burkley

Baby Jesus

Riley Burkley

Star

Julia Bortolotto

Kings

Owen Davis
Evan Greer
Nathan Theriault

Shepherds

Jack Bortolotto
Oriannah Dart
Eric Davis
Nick Endres
Emma Houle
Patrick Ruddell
Wyatt Ruddell

Animals

Jaxon Burkley
Cooper Cashins
Netaniah Dart
Bobby Kula
Julia Kula
Hayden Wilson

Angels

Mariellah Dart
Jolene Davis
Felicity Farrell
Julia Greer
Madeline Houle
Grace Riley
Johannah Wilson

Costumes

Mya Jones



Last but not least, we want to give a great big THANKS to all the adults that helped behind the scenes—costuming, corralling and warming up all the children during the filming process. We couldn't have done it without you!

Our Church Calendar

December 19—25, 2021

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	9:50 a.m.	Church School
	10:00 a.m.	Worship—Sanctuary
	11:00 a.m.	Fellowship—Community Room
	1:00 p.m.	Middle High Youth Group
	6:00 p.m.	Senior High Youth Group
Wednesday	9:30 a.m.	Staff Meeting—Parlor
Friday	5:00 p.m.	Christmas Eve Service
	7:00 p.m.	Christmas Eve Service