

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



“The angel said to them: “Do not be afraid, for I am bringing you good news of great joy for all people: to you is born in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

- Luke 2:10-11

THE ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

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

December 24, 2021

Christmas Eve

5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

PRELUDE

A Christmas Medley
Michael Havay, organ

trad. Carols

WELCOME and CHRISTMAS PROCLAMATION

Rev. Maureen Frescott

*CALL TO WORSHIP (*please stand in body or in spirit*)

Rev. Katherine Kennedy

One: We wait in the night

Many: In the hush that only stars can hold

One: We wait in the night

Many: Filled with anticipation of what midnight shall bring

One: We wait in the night

Many: With our hearts beating in rhythm with the birth of hope

One: We hold our collective breaths

Many: With the angelic host as they clutch their restless alleluias

One: For God is on the way:

Many: the mother is laboring

One: the father is pacing

Many: the stable is readying

One: the light is sliding

Many: and the promise is breaking through

One: We wait in the longing for midnight

Many: in expectation of Good News

One: We wait together

Many: and find we have moved to the edge of our seats

One: Our wait is now over!

Many: for the Word has been born among us!

The congregation may be seated.

LIGHTING THE ADVENT and CHRIST CANDLES

One: Over the last four Sundays of Advent we have lit four candles – for hope, for peace, for joy, for love. On this Christmas Eve we light all four again. With these candles we recognize the presence of God that surrounds and fills us at all times, and comes to us in a special way in the Christmas story.

One: Four candles, four promises offered to us by God, and all of them come to life in this one candle that we light tonight: the Christ candle. In Christ we find hope and transformation, empowering us to make our own unique contributions to the world. In Christ we find light and life, and the courage to be like him, answering his call and following in his footsteps.

(all five candles are lit)

One: Please join us in the Prayer of Invocation and the Lord's Prayer:

Many: Life giving God, on this Christmas Eve we hear your call ringing in our ears. We see the light of stars and candles, leading the way. We long for a sign, an experience, to know you face to face. We come, to be part of your story - of Love, of Hope, of Peace, of Joy. And we find all of this, in a tiny baby, lying in a manger.

**We give thanks to you this night and pray as you taught us through Jesus:
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

SPECIAL MUSIC

The First Nowell
Bell Choir

arr. Michael Helman

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Rev. Katherine Kennedy

THE CHRISTMAS STORY IN LESSONS AND CAROLS

THE VISITATION TO MARY

Luke 1:26-38

THE VISITATION TO JOSEPH

Matthew 1:18-21

Silent night, holy night
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth. Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

BLESSING and BENEDICTION

Rev. Maureen Frescott

POSTLUDE

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Felix Mendelssohn/
arr. Robert W. Thygerson

The congregation is invited to gather outside in front of the church to sing our final Christmas Carol. Please wait for the ushers to dismiss your row.

CAROL

Joy to the World!

Joy to the world! The Lord is come:
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare him room,
And heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing,
And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the earth! The Savior reigns:
Let us our songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness,
And wonders of his love, and wonders of his love,
And wonders, wonders of his love.

*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 this evening. A few worship notes:

- Our church nursery is open, but not 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.
- Offering plates can be found at the front and the rear of the sanctuary.
- In the event of an emergency, please remain seated until instructions have been given.

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



THE FLOWER ARRANGEMENT ON THE ALTAR

is created in honor of the many years Chris Trudo and Anne Krantz combined their efforts to declare the Glory of God.

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.

PARTICIPATING IN TONIGHT'S SERVICE

Members and Friends of The Congregational Church	Ministers to the World
Rev. Maureen R. Frescott	Senior Pastor
Rev. Katherine R. Kennedy	Associate Pastor
Sara L. Phelps	Director of Music
Michael Havay	Organist/Accompanist
Wendy Valeri	Bell Choir Director
Gretchen Davis	Interim Children's Coordinator
Russ Demarest	Deacon in Charge
Stephanie Dumoski	Videographer
Obadiah, Meredith, Oriannah, Mariellah and Netaniah Dart	5:00 p.m. Advent Wreath Lighters
Cheryl Gagne and Paul Mowatt	7:00 p.m. Advent Wreath Lighters
Cheryl Gagne, Nancy Gagnon, Katie Henderson, Sara Phelps, Sue Stout, Anita Swanson	Bell Choir Members
Zachary Elmer, Hadley Hornor, Ella Normandin, Taylee Normandin, Declan Pyles	5:00 p.m. Youth Readers
Phoebe Faucher, Emma Kennedy, Libby Kennedy, Izzie Warren, Amelia Wysor, Lucy Wysor	7:00 p.m. Youth Readers

Christmas Eve, December 24, 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

Shepherds

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

Angels

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

Star

Julia Bortolotto

Kings

Owen Davis
Evan Greer
Nathan Theriault

Animals

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