

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



*I remind myself every morning:
Nothing I say this day will teach me anything.
So if I'm going to learn, I must do it by listening.*

—Larry King

THE ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

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

December 18, 2022

Fourth Sunday of Advent
Creative Worship

10:00 a.m.

“Listening”

GATHERING CHIMES

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

GREETING AND NOTICES OF PARISH LIFE

PRELUDE

Love Came Down at Christmas, Op. 101, No. 5

Charles Villiers Stanford

INTROIT

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

Russ and Sandy Demarest

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.

(all four Advent candles are lit)

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

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

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

Many: 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: Let us worship together with Love!

*HYMN

We Hail You God's Anointed

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Please stand in body or in spirit.

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

The congregation may be seated.

Loving God, we open ourselves to you this Christmas season.

As we light our Advent candles, light our lives with your imagination.

Show us the creative power of hope.

Teach us the peace that comes with justice.

Fill us with the kind of joy that cannot be contained, but must be shared.

Magnify your love within us.

Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you,

that we may walk in the light of Jesus, who taught us to pray using these words:

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.

ANTHEM

The Holly and the Ivy
Chancel Choir

John Rutter

JOYS AND CONCERNS and PASTORAL PRAYER

If you have a prayer to share, fill out a prayer card in your pew. Cards will be collected by one of the pastors and will be shared during Joys and Concerns.

ORGAN RESPONSE

MESSAGE FOR ALL AGES

"Listening to the Christmas Story"

THE CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

THE ANNOUNCEMENT TO MARY

CAROL

O Little Town of Bethlehem

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!

Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;

Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light;

The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

THE BIRTH OF JESUS

CAROL

Away in a Manger

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

THE ANNOUNCEMENT TO THE SHEPHERDS

CAROL

The First Nowell

The first Nowell the angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay a-keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel.

THE SHEPHERDS GO TO BETHLEHEM

CAROL

Angels We Have Heard on High

Angels we have heard on high sweetly singing o'er the plains.
And the mountains in reply echo back their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come adore on bended knee, Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

THE ARRIVAL OF THE MAGI

CAROL

We Three Kings of Orient Are

We three kings of Orient are, bearing gifts we traverse afar,
Field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.
O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright;
Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY MUSIC

*Improvisation on "Divinum Mystrium"
(Of the Father's Love Begotten)*

David Lasky

*DOXOLOGY

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the new born king.
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful all ye nations, rise, Join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim Christ is born in Bethlehem!
Hark! The herald angels sing, Glory to the new born King!

*DEDICATION OF OUR GIFTS

One: We dedicate these gifts to Jesus that we might serve in his name.

Many: We ask God's blessing on Mary for we remember her courage and love.

One: We ask God's blessing on Joseph for we remember his care and concern.

Many: We ask God's blessing on the baby Jesus as he grows strong and full of faith.

One: God bless the angels who brought the good news.

Many: God bless the shepherds who came to worship.

One: May the animals remind us that all God's creatures are a blessing.

Many: May the Magi remind us that it is good to give gifts out of love.

One: We are grateful for the gift of Jesus, born in a manger in a simple place long ago.

Many: Let us celebrate the good news that Jesus Christ is born! Amen.

*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.

*THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD

*COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION

*CHORAL RESPONSE

*POSTLUDE

Joy, Joy, Joy

Bill Cain

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

*Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service
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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 in the pews and 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.
- Please remember to wear your nametag each Sunday, so that we may all greet our neighbors. If you do not have a permanent nametag, temporary nametags may be found inside the friendship registers. If you are in need of a new, permanent nametag, please see one of the deacons.
- Please join us in the community room for a time of fellowship after the worship service. Coffee and beverages are offered.
- 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

Sara L. Phelps

Michael Havay

Larissa Riley

Gail Wiegand

Bruce and Susan Manchester

Doug Topliffe

Wendy Valeri

Ministers to the World

Senior Pastor

Associate Pastor

Director of Music

Organist/Accompanist

Church School Coordinator

Deacon in Charge

Ushers

Videographer

Bell Choir Director

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.

MEN'S GENTLY USED OR NEW CLOTHING NEEDED: Crestwood Senior Living Center in Milford is in need of men's clothing. A box is in the church office for socks, comfortable pants, shirts and sweatshirts. If you have questions please contact Bruce Manchester at bruceman23@comcast.net.

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!

BEWARE OF FALLING SNOW AND ICE: During the winter months, we want to remind everyone that snow and ice may fall from our roof at any time. Please use caution when in our driveway, and do not walk too close to the building.

Financial Summary

(as of November 30, 2022)

	YTD	YTD	
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Income	\$205,894	\$208,731	\$ (2,837)
Expenses	\$212,393	\$214,449	\$ (2,056)
Net Income	\$ (6,499)	\$ (5,717)	\$ 781

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 (Treasurer), Doug Topliffe, Todd Whitney and Tim Wiegand.

WEDNESDAY MORNING ADULT ED

continues December 21 with *Understanding the New Testament*: Why do we have four Gospels? Why do they contradict each other at times? What was the purpose of Paul's letters? What is the Book of Revelation really about? Beginning this fall, we'll take a year-long look at the New Testament through this 24-part video lecture series produced by the Great Courses. We'll watch the video together as a group and then have a discussion facilitated by Pastor Maureen. All are welcome, and more information can be found on our website and in the *Spire*.

Our Church Calendar

December 18—24, 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
	11:15 a.m.	Fellowship
	4:00 p.m.	Senior High Youth Group
Wednesday	10:00 a.m.	Understanding the New Testament
Thursday	6:00 p.m.	Bell Choir
	7:30 p.m.	Chancel Choir
Saturday	5:00 p.m.	Family Service
	8:00 p.m.	Candlelight Service



**ALL BLOOD
TYPES NEEDED**



**American
Red Cross**

Blood Drive

Amherst Congregational Church

Community Room
11 Church St
Amherst, NH 03031

Friday, December 30, 2022
10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Services



Christmas Eve 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.

Our **5:00 p.m. Family Service** is tailored for families with young children and for the young at heart. Come hear the Christmas story as told by our Church School children and Confirmants in our traditional Christmas Pageant. We'll raise our child-friendly glow stick "candles" as we sing *Silent Night* and *Joy to the World* together!

Our **8:00 p.m. Candlelight Service** tells the Christmas story through lessons and carols with music from our Bell and Chancel Choirs. As the sanctuary gradually fills with candlelight and the singing of *Silent Night*, we proclaim the birth of Jesus, the light of the world!

Both services will be livestreamed on Facebook and will be available on our website after 9:30 p.m.

Christmas Day 10:00 a.m.

Join us on **Christmas Day at 10:00 a.m.** for our Sunday worship as we sing carols, celebrate the spirit of Christmas, and welcome the Christ Child into the world!

O Come, All Ye Faithful!

We Hail You God's Anointed

104

James Montgomery, 1821; alt.

Ps. 72



1 We hail you God's a - noint - ed, the long - a - wait - ed One!
 2 You shall come down like show - ers up - on the fruit - ful earth;
 3 The wise shall bow be - fore you and gold and in - cense bring;
 4 O'er ev - ery foe vic - to - rious, you on your throne shall rest;



Hail in the time ap - point - ed, your reign on earth be - gun!
 and joy and hope, like flow - ers, spring in your path to birth.
 all na - tions shall a - dore you, and praise all peo - ples sing;
 from age to age more glo - rious, all - bless - ing and all - blessed:



You come to break op - pres - sion, to set the cap - tive free;
 Be - fore you on the moun - tains shall peace, the her - ald, go,
 To you shall prayer un - ceas - ing and dai - ly vows be said,
 The tide of time shall nev - er your cov - e - nant re - move;



to take a - way trans - gres - sion, and rule in eq - ui - ty.
 and righ - teous - ness, in foun - tains, from hill to val - ley flow.
 your realm is still in - creas - ing, with you, O Christ, as head.
 your name shall stand for - ev - er, your change - less name of Love.

Written as a Christmas hymn for the Moravian settlement in Yorkshire, England, this hymn has enjoyed widespread popularity from the beginning. It is characteristic of Montgomery's deep faith and passion for social justice.

Tune: ELLACOMBE C.M.D.
 Gesangbuch der herzoglichen Wirtembergischen katholischen Hofkapelle, 1784

Sunday, December 18, 2022

