

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



*"I will light candles this Christmas, Candles of joy, despite all sadness,
Candles of hope where despair keeps watch. Candles of courage where
fear is ever present, Candles of peace for tempest-tossed days, Candles of
grace to ease heavy burdens. Candles of love to inspire all my living,
Candles that will burn all the year long."*

– Rev. Dr. Howard Thurman

THE ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

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

December 25, 2022

Christmas Day

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

Carols of Joy and Gladness

Lani Smith

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE ON CHRISTMAS DAY

One: Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love.

During the four Sundays of Advent we light four candles representing the four promises offered to us by God, and all come to life in this one candle that we light today: the Christ candle.

Many: In Christ we find hope and transformation, empowering us to live as he lived and to love as he loved.

(the Christ Candle is lit)

One: In Christ we find light and life, and the courage to be like him, answering his call and following in his footsteps.

Many: 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.

All: Let us worship the God of new life, together!

*HYMN

Please stand in body or in spirit.

The First Nowell

verses 1 and 2 only

No. 56

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

The congregation may be seated.

Life giving God, on this Christmas Day we hear your call ringing in our ears.

We've seen 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, Hope, Peace, and Joy.
And we find all of this, in a tiny baby, lying in a manger.
We give thanks to you this day 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.

*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

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

ANTHEM

Were You There on That Christmas Night?
Sara Phelps, soprano

Natalie Sleeth

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON

Luke 2:1-14, 15-20

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

'Glory to God in the highest heaven,

and on earth peace among those whom he favors!'

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

*HYMN *Go Tell It On the Mountain* No. 29

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE "Joy Unspeakable"

*HYMN *What Child Is This?* No. 53
verses 1 and 2 only

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 during the hymn after the sermon, and will be shared during Joys and Concerns.

ORGAN RESPONSE

INVITATION TO SHARE OUR OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY MUSIC *Winds of a Holy Night* David Paxton

*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!

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)

Jesus, born to us anew, infuse these gifts with your abundant, graceful Spirit. May the story of your birth inspire us to bring your light and love to a world longing for the Good News that You are with us, this day and every day. Amen.

*HYMN *Joy to the World!* No. 40
verses 1, 2 and 4 only

*COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION

*THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD

*POSTLUDE *Angels We Have Heard on High* Lani Smith

*(*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 8.
- 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.
- In the event of an emergency, please remain seated until instructions have been given.

The church office is not open this week, but is available 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

Gail Wiegand

Tim Wiegand

Ministers to the World

Senior Pastor

Associate Pastor

Director of Music

Organist/Accompanist

Deacon in Charge

Videographer

Wendy Valeri

Larissa Riley

Bell Choir Director

Church School 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.

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.



**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.**

Our Church Calendar

December 25—31, 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
Friday	10:00 a.m.	Red Cross Blood Drive
Saturday	10:00 a.m.	Memorial Service for Mary McKenzie

Sunday, December 25, 2022

